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DECEMBER 1929

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An examination of the bases of the school of criticism which has dominated this country in recent years. Mr. Foerster is professor of English at the University of North Carolina and a critic of rapidly growing importance. His book "American Criticism" and his symposium "The Reinterpretation of American Literature", both issued last year, were notable contributions to American scholarship. He has just published a small book, "The American Scholar". At present Mr. Foerster is editing a symposium to be called "Humanism in the United States". Its appearance in the spring will be an event of the first importance.

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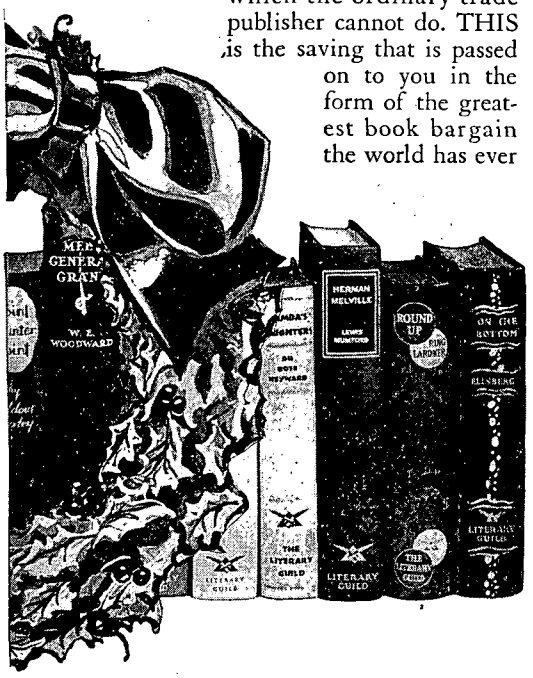

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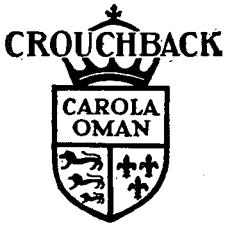

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Iron Horse, were contributing to the unification of the nation. Anecdote and photograph have been employed generously in both volumes; but even without them Miss Laut's work would invite consistent, interested reading.

MARLOWE AND HIS CIRCLE *A Biographical Survey by Frederick S. Boas* (OXFORD. $2.50)

THE discovery by Professor Hotson in 1925 of the papers relating to Marlowe's death at the hands of Frizer has stimulated research into the characters of the men with whom the poet was associated.

Professor Boas has put the results of this research, with other known matter touching the life and death of Marlowe, into an intelligent sequence. There is a list of the principal documents at the back, and an index.

WITCHES STILL LIVE *by Theda Kenyon* (WASHBURN. $3.50)

THE RECENT witchcraft trials in Pennsylvania have created an interest in the black art of today and Miss Kenyon's book should satisfy that interest. She traces the subject from its beginnings through its various manifestations, with emphasis on present-day practices. Anyone wanting to cast a spell or combat one will find help here. But, though it is most exciting and readable, the author's scholarliness is demonstrated by five pages of bibliography, ranging from *The Golden Bough* to editorials in the New York *World*.

THE SPY *by James Fenimore Cooper* (BOWLING GREEN PRESS. $20.00)

IN THREE small but finely designed volumes, *The Spy* reappears in the world of letters. This "first American novel to exploit patriotism successfully as a theme" is enhanced by ten pastel illustrations in full color by William Cotton, whose arresting work in this medium has appeared in the pages of THE BOOKMAN. Henry Seidel Canby presents both *The Spy* and Cooper in a discerning introduction which seeks to evaluate this Quaker paradox in American literature. The set is being distributed by the house of William Edwin Rudge, which has taken over all Bowling Green Press publications.

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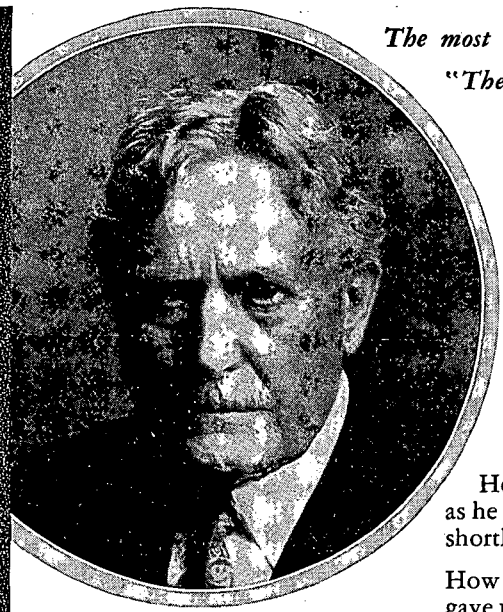

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PECCADILLOES *by Faraday Keene* (JOHN DAY. $2.00)

MOST of these stories, which have appeared in one of our smartest monthlies, would seem to be the result of Vienna on O. Henry. They are all short and vivid, with a surprising twist in the last line. But though they seem to derive from an old source, they are the *dernier cri* in sophistication. The author has taken the eternal triangle for a theme. It is always He, She, and the Tertium Quid. But each problem is handled with a deftness and piquancy that is astonishing. At times the situation is actual; at others it is mental; but always it is brilliant and convincing. . . . One story an evening, with coffee and cigarettes, is the best way to read them.

THIRTY TALES AND SKETCHES *by R. B. Cunninghame Graham* (VIKING. $3.00)

EDWARD GARNETT, the discoverer of so much fine talent, has collected in this book the best work of "the most unpopular of British authors" whom he considers "more than fifty years ahead of his time". Shaw, Conrad, W. H. Hudson, and many others unite to praise Mr. Cunninghame Graham, but he and his book could do very well without their tributes. For the author is an individualist who has travelled in all the strange corners of the world and something of their magic permeates his writing. His style is admirable for its clarity and dignity. He writes of places and people with sympathetic insight.

But it is not only for his art and his style that the book is valuable. Better than that, one meets here a rare personality. He hates civilization and its cant with a strong bitterness. He valiantly supports lost causes and the helpless. He cries and spits at the complexities he does not understand. And, happily for us, he is brave enough to write sincerely.

Successful writing and splendid technique are not unknown in these days among little men. But it is not often that such a genuine person as Cunninghame Graham can write so intimately. His vitality has passed into his book and the book lives. One more individualist has defeated time, space, and death.

THE SON OF PERDITION *by James Gould Cozzens* (MORROW. $2.50)

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Don Marquis is a master in the art of character writing, and is equally at home in writing good English and the language of the streets.

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Edited by Seward Collins

DECEMBER, 1929 VOL. LXX; NO. 4

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by Norman Foerster

"The truth is what appears to each man at each time." —*Protagoras*

THE VOGUE of impressionistic criticism in America in the twentieth century has been largely the result of revolt against the somewhat obtuse literary scholarship of the colleges and universities. Particularly after the year 1910, large numbers of young men keenly interested in life and in letters refused to follow the lead of the pedants, historians, and scientists of literature who seemed to have the *belles lettres* in their keeping, who proclaimed that literature must be studied laboriously but were never very clear as to why it should be studied at all, who maintained the old traditions as to what authors were important without infusing new vitality into those traditions, who were immensely erudite in their concern for the historical study of literature but appeared to conceive that history came to an end in the nineteenth century if not in the age of Elizabeth, who wrote books and articles and read papers before the Modern Language Association in a factual and mechanical language that gave scant promise of really illuminating the language of the poets and dramatists, who in their addiction to dates, texts, emendations, influences, evidence external and internal, appeared to have lost the power of enjoying life or literature in terms of feeling, imagination, and reason in its freer activities.

Even if these men of learning had a right to exist (which was more than some of the young rebels conceded), a few of them would surely go a long way, and the huge and ever-growing bulk of such men were betraying the cause that they professed, transforming *litterae humaniores* into *litterae inhumaniores*. Against the august scholars who had possessed themselves of the institutions of education a band of bright-minded young intellectuals ranged themselves with more and more confidence; taking the offensive, they remade old organs of opinion and established new ones, and won the ear of the public through their smartness, their alert open-mindedness, their outspokenness, and their advocacy of authors and tendencies whose day was drawing near. At length they carried their impressionistic programme to triumph in the years just following the World War.

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That impressionism did triumph in these years anyone could readily see, I think, by comparing the American criticism of the nineteenth century, which mainly followed the romantic lawgivers, with a typical post-war book such as the Modern Library anthology entitled *A Modern Book of Criticism* (1919), edited by Ludwig Lewisohn. In his introduction Mr. Lewisohn finds that the college teacher "devotes himself to formal studies in literary history", while the ordinary journalist expresses "the average tribal reaction to new books and plays", and that the pretensions of the "older group" of critics, such as Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, were demolished years before by a still older group of critics, such as Anatole France and Jules Lemaître, who appear to be the model our emancipated young critics properly imitate. In his lively moral enthusiasm Mr. Lewisohn pictures the allied historical scholars and tribal reviewers as "an army of Goliaths", against whom are arrayed a band of intellectuals "like a troupe of shivering young Davids—slim and frail but with a glint of morning sunshine on their foreheads". I think this is an unduly modest estimate of these young Davids, who, as the historical scholar will one day prove to us, at that time already had victory in their grasp. In the higher circles of opinion, if not in the provincial newspapers, the impressionists were well established by 1919. Only two years after, when *The New Republic* invited "a number of contemporary critics" (deceased and unborn critics having been ruled out), "representing every school, to give their answer" to the question "What is the function of criticism?" it happened that five or six of the seven contributors came out more or less vigorously for impressionism—a sufficient indication of the success of the cause.* If these critics indeed represented "every school", the schools then existing differed only in their shades of impressionism, which I take *not* to have been the fact. For the historian of literature will presently show us, I suspect, that, though impressionism was perhaps at its apogee about 1921, other significant schools not represented in the symposium were then conceiving otherwise of the function of criticism, and he will further tell us, I suspect, that, though impressionism became more general in the ensuing years, it weakened gradually as its Davids lost full conviction, as leaders of other camps grew in power, and as certain parts of the reading public began to look elsewhere for leaders more likely to cope with the disintegration of modern thought.

The historian will also convince us, we may assert with assurance, that the rise and triumph of impressionism cannot be explained simply as a reaction against academic excesses of philology and historicity. Impressionism is fundamentally a child of the romantic movement of the early nineteenth century. Romanticism, reacting against the pedantry of rules and defects, concerned itself with "beauties" rather than defects and with organic necessity instead of mechanical rules. The best critic, as the practice of Coleridge, Lamb, and Hazlitt seemed to demonstrate in England, is he who is keenly sensitive to impressions, responsive to excellence in many kinds, gifted in intuitive perceptions, contagious in his enthusiasms, rich in personality and in powers of self-expression. These qualities and others appeared later in Sainte-Beuve, one of Arnold's masters, who united in himself the best of the impressionistic and historical lines of development. Arnold himself, though his central tendency was toward humanism, sometimes compromised his humanistic principles by leaving them vague, so that they could be twisted to serve the ends of pure impressionism, as in the case of such catch-words as "disinterestedness", "flexibility", and "elasticity". Drawing upon Arnold, drawing more largely upon a new wave of

* The contributors to this symposium were Robert Morss Lovett, H. L. Mencken, J. Middleton Murry, Morris R. Cohen, Dickinson S. Miller, Clive Bell, and Francis Hackett. *The New Republic*, Literary Supplement, October 26, 1921.

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romantic feeling that rose in his time, Walter Pater stated clearly, in the preface and conclusion to *The Renaissance*, the essential creed of impressionism. Oscar Wilde followed, and Arthur Symons, and others; in England, as in France, impressionism triumphed in the *décadence* of the nineteenth century. Its most authoritative pronouncement was in *La Vie littéraire* of Anatole France so long ago as 1888. Here in America, we have had no Anatole France; we have had only a Mr. Mencken.

I

Though the creed of the followers of Pater and Anatole France at first glance appears very simple, on a near examination it turns out to be singularly elusive. In theoretical statement, it is one thing; in practical application, another. Repudiating any fraternity in taste, and asserting complete liberty and equality in taste, impressionism in actual practice is much given to making its judgments prevail. If one chooses to disregard this discrepancy between theory and practice on the ground that integrity is not to be looked for in human affairs, one is still confronted with another and more serious discrepancy within the theory itself. Maintaining that impressions are unique and relative to the individual, this theory oscillates between the idea that they are relative to the individual author and the idea that they are relative to the individual critic. There are really two types of impressionistic criticism, one concerned with the uniqueness of the author and the other concerned with the uniqueness of the critic, and between these types most of the work of this school hovers disconcertingly.

One encounters this ambiguity already in Walter Pater, author of the most famous statement of impressionism in English. The first type of impressionism dominates his preface, in which he fundamentally rests his argument on the dictum of Matthew Arnold that the aim of criticism is "to see the object as in itself it really is". If criticism begins when one realizes distinctly one's pleasurable sensations in the presence of an object of art, it attains its end when one defines the special power or force in the object that produced these sensations, when one at length perceives the causative "virtue" that characterizes the work—when the critic "has disengaged that virtue, and noted it, as a chemist notes some natural element, for himself and others". This is curiously like one of the scientific occupations of the literary historian, who, by eliminating all influences upon a given work, aims to reveal what is unique in that work. In the spirit of the historian Pater goes on to say that the impressionist "will remember always that beauty exists in many forms. To him all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal". The impressionist differs from the historian, however, in seeking to make his way to all periods, types, and schools of taste, not by means of knowledge of externals but by means of "a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects". In the words of Sainte-Beuve, whom Pater quotes, the rule of the impressionists is *"de se borner à connaître de près les belles choses, et à s'en nourrir en exquis amateurs, en humanistes accomplis"*. Through esthetic appreciation, they seek to know beautiful things intimately, to assimilate the unique virtue of each, and to help others to assimilate this virtue. They believe that the function of the critic is, in plain language, that of an appreciator and a showman.

Now, as I have already suggested, this is only a late form of the romantic theory of criticism, rather than a new theory requiring a new name. According to the romantic theory, the fundamental critical virtue is that of sympathy, the essence of taste is the same as that of creative genius, and the best critic is he who reveals the nature of beautiful things by complete understanding of the creative intent in them. In romantic criticism,

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beauty has many mansions; strictly, indeed, each author's work, and each work of each author, is an unique organism. Essentially relativistic, romanticism sought to supplant an artificial notion of the unity of man with an organic conception of the uniqueness of men. "I am made unlike anyone I have ever seen"—Rousseau's notorious temperamental declaration of independence—was repeated in substance by a long procession of egos eager to confess and exhibit themselves in all their varied naturalness. Even Emerson, like Eve in Paradise, was fascinated by that mysterious and "peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear". Turning away from the classical and pseudo-classical preoccupation with the normal, the representative, the universal, romanticism gave itself up to a quest of the unusual, the strange, the novel, finding everything admirable so long as it was spontaneous. If it was prejudiced against the age before, for which it had terms of opprobrium like our "Victorian" and "Puritan", it had on the whole quite as much breadth of sympathy and readiness of gusto as those more recent *exquis amateurs* whom we style impressionists. The appreciator-showman we might more properly style the romanticist, and reserve the new term for the second kind of impressionist, the impressionist impressed with himself.

When the romantic movement had lost its exuberant spirits and high seriousness, it became increasingly doubtful to later critics, romantic in temperament, whether they could really return to the author's vision and perceive the uniqueness of that vision. How, they asked, can we know, as critics, the artistic object as it really is, when we cannot even safely assert, as philosophers, that we know anything? The most that we know is that each of us receives impressions from without, an ever-changing flux of impressions. For us, there is no abiding reality in external nature, the realm of appearance, nor is there any abiding reality in the inner experience of the mind, which is but the scene of personal and fugitive impressions. We cannot escape out of ourselves. If we would be honest, we must rest content with an old Greek formula: "The truth is what *appears* to *each* man at *each* time". This recrudescence of radical impressionism, latent in romantic relativity and abetted by that "keenest skepticism" which, as Huxley asserted, science demanded, is to be found two years after the lay sermon "On the Advisableness of Improving Natural Knowledge", in the conclusion to Walter Pater's *Studies in the Renaissance*. Considered in relation with the preface, this conclusion is violently paradoxical.

Quite in the manner of his twentieth-century descendants, he begins with these words: "To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought". After proceeding to reduce experience to a swarm of impressions upon the human mind, he reduces it yet further by maintaining that "Experience . . . is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world. Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment". Life is, then, made up of these fleeting moments, and it behoves us to cherish them while we may, to miss none of them, to feel these pulses of life keenly,—"to burn always with this hard, gemlike flame", instead of forming habits and opinions in a false and stereotyped existence. This is the ecstasy of art, above all else; our highest wisdom is "the love of art for its own sake". "For art," Pater

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concludes, "comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake."

This indeed is an impressionistic theory of life and art, and something very different from the romantic theory to which Pater limited himself in his preface. There, it will be recalled, one's impression, one's pleasurable sensations in the presence of an object of art, is only a necessary preliminary, a means toward the end of criticism, that end being "to see the object as in itself it really is". He does not doubt, in the preface, that we can so see the object, that we can *know* beautiful objects intimately, that we can disengage the virtue that is *in* them,—not merely in them for us personally,—and that we can successfully note this virtue for the benefit of *others*. With this argument Pater may have reconciled, to his own satisfaction if not to ours, his other argument that our impressions are forever changing, that they are merely our personal impressions, and that the thick wall of personality forbids communication. Such is the experimental disinterestedness, the flexibility, the elasticity of the impressionist!

When loyal to his creed, the impressionist knows nothing save that he is the scene of delightful (and painful) impressions. Although he uses reason to justify his skepticism, he shares the romanticist's hostility to reason as a means of perceiving truth. Although he is a man of feeling, seeking the "unique pleasure" which each object or moment may bring, and describing it with a delicate emotional sensitiveness, he lacks the romanticist's faith in feeling as a means of perceiving truth. The pursuit of truth, indeed, he solemnly or jestingly renounces. He has only the relative truth of his impressions, and his life consists in enjoying them and expressing some of them in a private creative joy (since, strictly, he cannot communicate them to others). The impressionist, in a word, may be defined as a disillusioned romantic critic who has turned creator. If he cannot see artistic objects as they are, if he cannot return to the impressions which the artists sought to objectify, if he cannot comprehend the uniqueness of artists, he can yet create new artistic objects by expressing his impression of the objects created by artists, and thus offer his own uniqueness in lieu of that of so-called creative artists. Abandoning as hopeless the task of appreciative criticism, or revelation of the author, he takes refuge in creative criticism, or revelation of the critic. Though what he thinks of a book can have no validity for anyone but himself, the expression of his thought may nevertheless have value as a piece of new creation. It is the book as seen through a temperament, and if the temperament is exceptionally rich and interesting, this expression may also be exceptionally rich and interesting—more so, conceivably, than the book itself. And temperament being, like everything else, in perpetual flux from year to year, month to month, day to day, what is true for it at one time may not be true for it at another. A piece of criticism is thus a fragment of the critic's autobiography; to be exact, it is a given artistic object seen through a given temperament at a given moment.

This creed, so simple in its logic, has been most tellingly advocated by the Gallic mind, above all by Anatole France and Jules Lemaître, whose suave intelligence, urbane irony, and accomplished charm of style have captivated many moderns who might have been less attentive to the same ideas had they been presented through less arresting personalities. How can one answer Lemaître when he writes: "I assure you, it is possible for me, as for other people, to judge on principles and not on impressions. Only if I did so I should not be sincere. I should say things of which I should not be sure, while I am sure of my impressions. I can, on the whole, only describe myself in my contact with the works that are submitted to me. That can be done without indiscretion or self-conceit, for there is a part of our personality in each of us

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which can interest everybody. You say this is not criticism? Then it is something else, and I am not greatly concerned about the name you give to what I write".

Is not this candor wholly admirable? Is it possible to answer these simple truths without pedantry, without indiscretion or self-conceit? Who would not prefer the honesty of the master impressionist, Anatole France, to the strained reasoning of the "objective" critic, who, as France reports, accuses him of being "tainted with subjectivity, the worst of evils; for from subjectivity one sinks into illusion, sensuality, and concupiscence, and one judges human work by the pleasure received therefrom, which is an abomination; because one must not derive pleasure from any intellectual work without knowing whether one is right to be pleased; because man, being a reasoning animal, must first of all reason; for it is necessary to be right, and not necessary to find gratification; because it is man's business to seek instruction by means of dialectic, which is infallible; because one must always put a truth at the end of a chain of reasoning, like a knot at the end of a thread, since otherwise the reasoning would not hold, and it is necessary that it should, because one attaches thereto several further reasons so as to form an indestructible system which lasts ten years or so".

If we will be honest with ourselves, is not this pretty much what objective criticism comes to? Are we not ready to accept the forthright assertion of Anatole France that "There is no such thing as objective criticism any more than there is objective art, and all who flatter themselves that they put aught but themselves into their work are dupes of the most fallacious illusion. The truth is that one never gets out of oneself (*qu'on ne sort jamais de soi-même*). That is one of our greatest miseries. What would we not give to see, if but for a minute, the sky and the earth with the many-faceted eye of a fly, or to understand nature with the rude and simple brain of an ape? But just that is forbidden us. We cannot, like Tiresias, be men and remember having been women. We are locked into our persons as into a lasting prison". And is not our effort to emerge from ourselves by our own will uncomfortably like that of the old Nuremberg professor, absorbed in esthetics, who at night used "to exchange his visible body for an astral one, in order to compare the legs of beautiful sleepers with those of the Venus of Praxitiles"? What is there to hinder us, save stubbornness and stupidity, from confessing the plain truth as to what we are doing when we indulge in criticism—when we have not that "strength to be silent" which a faithful skepticism asks of us, asking more than we can give? To be quite frank, the critic ought to say, "Gentlemen, I am going to talk about myself on the subject of Shakespeare, or Racine, or Pascal, or Goethe—subjects that offer me a beautiful opportunity". Are we not ready at last to subscribe to the familiar words: "The good critic is he who relates the adventures of his soul among masterpieces"?

II

Whether or not one subscribes impressionist, one must admit that the creed of Anatole France is not only seductive but also, in certain respects, admirable and useful. Apparently taking a hint from Nietzsche, J. E. Spingarn has described the old, old conflict between objective and impressionistic criticism as a conflict between the sexes: "They are", he conceives, "the two sexes of Criticism; and to say that they flourish in every age is to say that every age has its masculine as well as its feminine criticism,—the masculine criticism that may or may not force its own standards on literature, but that never at all events is dominated by the object of its studies; and the feminine criticism that responds to the lure of art with a kind of passive ecstasy." *

* *Creative Criticism* (1917), p. 12. Ignoring the eternal triangle involved in this figure—a masculine criti-

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To deny virtues to feminine (or impressionistic) criticism would be, at the least, ungallant. What are these virtues?

1. Foremost is the indispensable virtue of esthetic responsiveness. Without comprehension of the creative point of view, without intuitive understanding of the author's intention, without openness to the impression that the author strove to convey, the critic cannot hope to see the object as it really is, cannot feel and know it as he must before he can justly criticize it. In the actual practice of criticism, the application of theory to particular works, one must agree with Francis Hackett that the mere "possession of all the best esthetic theories in the world does not guarantee one syllable of one's criticism", "for without genuine *rapport* there is no spark of life in anything that is written or said about literature". Equally futile is the mere possession of all the best learning in the world, even the historical learning which the scholar fondly values for enabling him to see the real object and to estimate it. Forgetting that historical learning is of small consequence in comparison with intuitive understanding (commonly five or ten percent of the total means to knowledge, to reduce the matter to scholarly exactness), the modern professor of literature plies a species of scientific research that takes him farther and farther from literature and renders his casual efforts at criticism sophomoric. The prior condition to all good criticism is a wise passiveness to the will of the author, as even a pseudo-classicist like Alexander Pope recognized:

> A perfect judge will read each work of wit
> With the same spirit that its author writ.

To this truth Pope and his kind offered little more than lip-service; it remained for later schools of criticism, romantic and impressionistic, to show the full significance of such statements, if also to exaggerate them till their feminine criticism became *voluptueuse*.

2. Vitality of expression, important in all criticism, is a prime virtue of impressionism. Feeling the need of communicating his enjoyment, chaste or voluptuous, the impressionist tends to think of himself, in the phrase of Clive Bell, as "a guide and an animator". Hence he seeks "first to bring his reader into the presence of what he believes to be art, then to cajole or bully him into a receptive frame of mind. He must, therefore, besides conviction, possess a power of persuasion and stimulation". Dulness, deadness, the want of vitality, is never easily pardoned in any writing, creative or critical—a fact of which impressionists are, for the most part, well aware. Whether animated by the author's or by their own uniqueness, they want to be and usually are interesting. What life scintillates in the pages of Charles Lamb, what quiet ardor suffuses those of Walter Pater, what subtle perfections of feeling and intelligence lure the reader of Anatole France to the last measured word! These men can write, can animate and stimulate, can speak a living language akin to that of the authors whom we term creative. This mobility of phrase, this instinct for the telling word, this aptness in the revealing image, persuading us insensibly that the writer sees and speaks from within art, is a powerful instrument that every critic should seek to forge for himself.

3. The impressionist is useful in reminding

cism, a feminine criticism, and an hermaphrodite art—Mr. Spingarn declares that the rival criticisms should be "mystically mated"—presumably in the expressionistic criticism of Croce. The true origin of Croce's theory is, however, to be found in romanticism. As Mr. Spingarn acknowledges, romanticism substituted "expression" for "imitation" as the key to art, and formulated "the principle that art has no aim except expression; that its aim is complete when expression is complete; that 'beauty is its own excuse for being' ". This principle is the source of the esthetic of Croce, who has indeed "driven home its inevitable consequences" in a set of ideas that many persons have found as alluring as those of radical impressionism. At bottom, they are only a sophisticated form of conservative impressionism, that is, of appreciative or romantic theory. For the identification of genius and taste, e. g., which Mr. Spingarn heralds as "the final achievement of modern thought on the subject of art", one may overlook Croce and go straight back to August Wilhelm Schlegel's lectures in 1803. I cannot see that Croce has done anything more than prolong interest in the cult of appreciation. His work has colored our contemporary speculation far more than our actual practice of criticism, and it has produced no discernible school of critics.

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us of the subjective element, the element of uniqueness in men, that forbids a wholly scientific or objective criticism. *L'équation personelle* is a source of distortion even in science, far more in history, and still more in criticism. Without following the radical impressionist into the abyss of pure relativity, the critic must cherish the doubts that send him back to examine his authors and their works afresh, must weigh the force of many opinions at variance with his own, must be quite frank in exposing the fundamental assumptions upon which his judgments ultimately rest, and must be content to present his truth as provisional. His problem, indeed, is the infinitely delicate one of establishing the mean between the extremes of dogmatism and pure relativity. Thanks to the development of relativistic thought that followed long ages of dogmatic authority, the twentieth-century critic has this problem more clearly and squarely before him than it has ever been before his predecessors.

4. Finally, radical impressionism, by insisting upon both vitality of expression and the uniqueness of the critic, has made us fully realize the importance, in criticism, of personality. When Oscar Wilde says (and Mr. Lovett repeats) that "The critic occupies the same relation to the work of art that he criticizes as the artist does to the visible world of form and color, or the unseen world of passion and thought", he expresses an idea that an ancient like Aristotle could not well have grasped but that nevertheless contains an element of important truth. The ancients did not think of literature, creative or critical, as self-expression, and if we moderns think of it as nothing else, we are not wholly misguided. Although all writers are judged, in the end, by their truth of vision and mastery of the art of writing, their truth is still the truth as seen by one man and their mastery is the mastery attained by one man—an agent there must be and his qualities will inevitably color his work. If personality be indeed less valuable than impersonality, it everywhere registers itself in art, in critical as in creative literature, and in this respect creation and criticism are one. We have latterly said much of "creative criticism", meaning either that the critic repeats the creative act or that he becomes a creator in his own right. These seem to me false meanings; but we may properly use the phrase hereafter if we mean by it that criticism reflects personality and therefore belongs less with science than with art.

III

Reacting against the crude dogmas of pseudo-classical criticism in the eighteenth century, and against the factual method of pseudo-scientific scholarship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, impressionism has at least aimed at central principles of art and criticism. But it has overshot its mark. I have tried to show how much may be said for it; but more must be said against it.

1. Of "appreciation", the theory of the showman, it suffices to say that it does not constitute criticism. Despite the etymology and proper meaning of the word, appreciation does not effect an appraisal or evaluation, but accepts the works of art as the scientist accepts the works of nature. Ignoring the fact that art and nature are two things, romantic or appreciative criticism conceives each work of art as an organism developing from within according to a law of its own. It looks for the vital, the spontaneous, the unique, and is content in rendering these plain to those who cannot see them so well as the responsive critic. Ultimately, I fear, the appreciator is merely a teacher of inexperienced readers, an enthusiatic pedagogue, like a certain professor who announced as his theory of teaching literature: "Come on in, boys, the water's fine". To be satisfied with *rapport* and with passing it on to others, is, however, to renounce the immemorial right of criticism to judge art by standards and criteria that transcend the uniqueness of authors and their works. As a matter of fact, every showman,

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whatever his professions of impartial understanding, has actually decided preferences, and his central task would seem to be not to reject them out of hand, but to examine them earnestly to determine wherein they are personal and wherein they are human. However difficult it may be to determine this distinction, the critic cannot afford to shrink from this task and limit himself to the easier task of accepting every manner of vital uniqueness.

2. The still easier task of independent creation is assuredly not criticism. Aware that he can never attain absolute *rapport,* that he can never hope to see eye to eye with the artist, that, if taste and genius are identical, taste is strictly non-existent, the appreciator more or less candidly turns creator. He is now content to interest himself in the only uniqueness that he deems within his reach, namely, his own, and to regard the products of all other unique individuals as material for his own creative effort, rather than as subjects for objective criticism. If reproached with abandoning the field of criticism, he may reply, as we have seen, that he does not much care what one calls his compositions so long as they are interesting or charming. Surely, however, the question at issue is not a name but that which the name signifies. If the impressionist will give us criticism under another name, we shall be duly grateful; but in truth he does not give it to us at all. He gives us a work of art, which might as well be a lyric or an autobiographic episode as a critical essay. It is, indeed, in a very real sense a lyric or an autobiographic episode—an adventure of the "soul" not among men or among natural objects but among masterpieces and apprentice-pieces of literature. This is not what we wanted, and I do not see why we should accept something else irrelevant to the purpose in view.

3. If we are told that the wise critic must doubt and finally reject this purpose, we are to assert that skepticism is not the whole of wisdom. While wisdom must entertain doubts, it refuses to serve the one and only and jealous god of doubt. The wisdom we are speaking of is human wisdom, and we must satisfy our humanity, as even Anatole France, most faithful of skeptics, was honest enough to recognize. Pure skepticism, he admitted, would involve us in perfect silence, all speech being affirmation of one sort or other, and from this spectre of absolute sterility he confessed that he recoiled. The result was a long series of published affirmations, and one knows not how many hours of oral affirmations. The same paradox is manifest in the works of his vulgarian American miniature, one of our New Republicans, who has habitually regarded other people's truths as prejudices and his own prejudices as truths, even while declaring that truth is "something that is believed in only by persons who have never tried personally to pursue it to its fastnesses and grab it by the tail". The contemporary impressionist speaks as though the elusiveness of this tail were a new observation in natural history. A rather long time ago, in a firmly ironical passage in one of the Platonic dialogues, Socrates answered the Anatole France of his time, the Sophist Protagoras, who maintained that man is the measure of all things. "I am charmed with his doctrine," remarks Socrates, "that what appears is to each one, but I wonder that he did not begin his book on Truth with a declaration that a pig or a dog-faced baboon, or some other yet stranger monster which has sensation, is the measure of all things; then he might have shown a magnificent contempt for our opinion by informing us at the outset that while we were reverencing him like a God for his wisdom he was no better than a tadpole, not to speak of his fellow-men." * And Socrates continues: "If truth is only sensation, and no man can discern another's feelings better than he, or has any superior right to determine whether his opinion is true or

* Anatole France, it will be recalled, openly coveted the brain of an ape. His is a bolder statement than usual of the modern thirst for the primitive.

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false, but each . . . is to himself the sole judge, and everything that he judges is true and right, why, my friend, should Protagoras be preferred to the place of wisdom and instruction, and deserve to be well paid, and we poor ignoramuses have to go to him, if each one is the measure of his own wisdom?"

It is plain enough that Protagoras, like Anatole France, regarded his own opinions as truer than those of most of his contemporaries, and that not a few of his contemporaries agreed that they were truer, since they paid good coin for them. It is plain enough that the modern impressionists, like other supporters of special theories of life and art, are inly assured that their light is not darkness, and that darkness bedevils those who think otherwise. Analyzed more searchingly than they will analyze themselves, they will be found to agree with Mr. Murry, who, though strongly drawn by the appreciative and creative theories, yet admits that "The critic stands or falls by the stability of his truth", or even with Dr. Johnson, whom Mr. Murry dares to quote in *The New Republic:* "Nothing can please many and please long, but just representations of human nature. . . . The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; but the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can repose only on the stability of truth".

4. Impressionism never succeeds in explaining away tradition, that element of permanence which links remote times and places and is hostile to fundamental alteration. The impressionist argument that tradition is a delusion and does not really exist, cannot be brushed aside as contrary to common sense, since the impressionist does not accept a sense that is common to men. Nor can it be brushed aside as merely sophomoric, an instance of clever foolishness, since the impressionist takes his argument so seriously that it has itself become traditional. This lends it at least the semblance of authority.

More exactly, the argument is that what we term tradition is nothing more than an artificial and spurious consequence of stupid docility. As Anatole France declares, "Some work which, for some reason or other, has, to begin with, gained the suffrages of some, will thereupon gather those of many. The first alone were free; all the others did nothing but obey. They have neither spontaneity, nor insight, nor courage, nor any character. And their multiplication creates fame. It all depends upon a very small beginning". Now, it is plain that tradition does depend upon a very small beginning, but why must we assert that it grows solely by docile imitation, that all those who subscribe to the original opinion are without spontaneity, insight, courage, and any character? Are we to believe that Anatole France himself was without these qualities when he admired masterpieces favored by tradition and thus added his weight to tradition? Is it likely that these qualities are possessed in common by impressionists and by nobody else? Are we to believe that we must look in vain for spontaneity, insight, courage, or character in Lessing, in Dr. Johnson, in Coleridge, in Arnold, all of whom were concerned with tradition, with real estimates as opposed to artificial, with universal judgments as opposed to personal? Is it not men like these who build and maintain, form and reform tradition? They, too, like the leaders of impressionism, have a following largely in consequence of docile imitation; as in all human affairs, there are both leaders and led, and it is the leaders, those superior in the aforesaid qualities, who count most in the establishment and continuance of fame and tradition. Instead of centering his attention upon the leaders, the impressionist chooses to see only the stupidity and hypocrisy of the rank and file, remarking that the works that everybody admires are those which nobody examines (*celles que personne n'examine*). But "nobody" is a large word, which here includes the few but fit somebodies who read and reread the masterpieces.

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It is significant that even the impressionist speaks of masterpieces, and finds in them some of his most interesting adventures.

When he does turn to the leaders, the impressionist must logically admit that critics like Lessing, Dr. Johnson, Coleridge, and Arnold after all possess independence, since they attain prominence largely by disagreeing with current majority opinions. Furthermore, if they agree as to the masters and masterpieces, they do so for different reasons. If, for example, the fame of Homer, the fame of Shakespeare, continues on its way, its progress is certainly marked with curious contradictions. In the seventeenth century a leader like Boileau praised Homer for having observed the rules of the epic, but today, says Anatole France, we discover and admire in the *Iliad* its "barbarous and primitive character". Aside from the fact that this represents adequately neither Boileau nor a modern like Gilbert Murray, it illustrates not only the disagreement of critics but also their independence. Their disagreement as to the reasons for eminence, moreover, arises mainly from the fact that great authors have various sides. We need not think it strange that a critic should emphasize a side neglected by the age before, or serviceable for the needs of his own age; nor must we conclude that he is blind to other sides. That Gilbert Murray tends to romanticize the Greeks is a natural consequence of his living in an age saturated with romanticism, but it does not mean that his Greeks have nothing in common with those of Jebb or Arnold. That the pseudo-classicists of the eighteenth century tried to fit Shakespeare into the "rules" was inevitable in that age of abstract reason, but it does not mean that they were incapable of responding to Shakespeare on other grounds. For my part, I cannot see anything profound in the assertion of Anatole France that "There is not a single opinion in literature which one cannot easily fight with its precise opposite. Who, then, will be able to end the disputes of the flute-players?" If we will but listen keenly enough, we shall generally find that the flute-players are merely playing different versions of the same tune.

Tradition is indeed a formidable obstacle to those who would make judgment a purely private concern. And theirs is the burden of proof. For tradition is an established fact, as old as human history, capable of endless modification, but impervious to frontal attacks calculated to destroy it, utterly insensitive to the clever paradoxes and shallow logicality of light-armed skeptics. The case against it, indeed, can be proved by one method only: by showing that tradition deceived us in this given instance, then in that instance, and then in every instance. Here is an ambitious task to which impressionists should address themselves at once. If one generation of impressionists can dispose of only a few instances, surely they will have confidence in ultimate victory. And since, as has been said, impressionism also has a tradition, they will have to consider in the end, if not at the beginning, whether their own tradition like all the rest is false.

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PENELOPE

by Theda Kenyon

She watched the last glint on Odysseus's casque,
And dared to smile.
"He will be gone for such a little while—
And I shall fill my empty hands with weaving—
A fitting task:
Completed as he comes, begun as he is leaving!"
She caught the strands
Of tangled, jungle colors in her hands.
"Yes—let the puppy lie there at my feet—
So shall we wait together for his coming!"

"He must return," she said—
(Toss the gold, and twist the scarlet thread.)
"Return to this mad haven of my heart—
Has he not said that no magician's art
Could conjure up a fire
Intense as our desire?"

"He shall return," she said—
(Weave the yellow, and bind the green with red.)
"Return to this rich haven of my lips—
Has he not told me half a thousand ships
Could not bear argosy to weigh with this—
The treasure of my kiss?"

"He will return," she said—
(Ravel the gray, and reel the ebon thread.)
"Return to this safe haven of my breast.
Perhaps—perhaps he may not love me best,
But weary wandering hearts must take their rest—
Wandering weary men will take their rest.
He will return," she said.

She wove while heartbreak grimaced in the reel,
And madness undertoned the whirring wheel.
She raised her head:
"What is that crazy humming?
Bees? Is another Spring
Flaunting its garish joy of burgeoning?—
Lead that old dog away. . . . I cannot bear his grieving. . . ."

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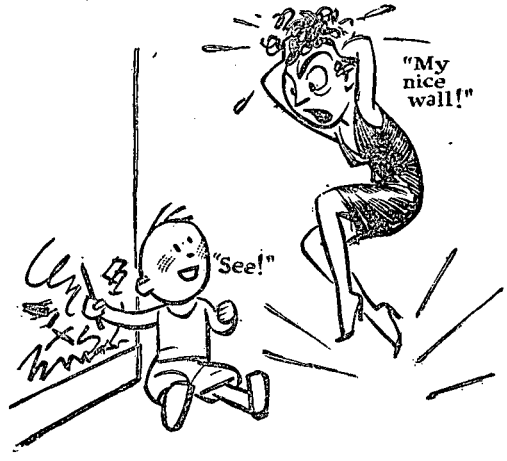
THE CARE AND FEEDING OF AUTHORS

by Guy Holt

So many private homes now contain authors and so little is known about their habits and requirements that it seems desirable to offer a few practical suggestions for the proper care of these delicate organisms. Although authors have been known from the earliest times, and have been encountered sporadically in all quarters of the globe, they have only recently become really popular as pets. Nowadays people of modest means find it possible to rear at least one of these creatures with results that are often pleasurable and on occasion highly profitable.

In former times little thought and no scientific knowledge was exercised in the nurture of members of the family literati. They grew wild and were given only the casual attention that is accorded the ordinary or household variety of the same genus. But since the commercial value of this species has been recognized and especially now that they are so widely used in the manufacture of popular magazines, the demand for healthy specimens has greatly increased, and scientists have turned their attention to the development of a rational method of furthering their growth and full development. As yet, the literature on the subject is scanty; it is probable that the present treatise is the first attempt to make a broad general survey of the whole field. The writer unhappily can lay no claim to finality in his observations; they represent the product of twenty years' study and experiment, but this field of research is so new that only tentative conclusions can be drawn from it.

Let it be said at the outset that the present study does not in any way deal with the artificial manufacture of authors. I am aware that in the last two or three decades remarkable progress has been made in this direction, and that a number of really extraordinary imitations have been placed on the market. Indeed I am told that many of the most popular magazines subsist upon them exclusively and that more than a handful of publishers have used them in the preparation of books with highly satisfactory results. Nevertheless—and call this unscientific sentimentalism if you will—I cannot believe that in the long run the synthetic author will prove as serviceable as the natural, or true, author,



Such infantile manifestations indicate nothing

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and I would particularly urge the amateur to have nothing to do with the artificial type.

How to identify the beginning author is a matter which has been the subject of much controversy, but the majority of experts agree that it is impossible to distinguish the author from the non-author during the very early stages of its growth. Such infantile manifestations as colic unduly prolonged indicate nothing. An early preoccupation with pencil and paper is common to the entire genus rather than to the special group with which we are dealing. The housewife may therefore

The audience at first is extremely limited in size

disregard the need for any special form of treatment during the first period of development.

But between the eighth and the fifteenth year (varying in different specimens) certain unmistakable symptoms develop which should at once be carefully noted. At first there is a slight tendency toward withdrawal when brought into contact with others of its kind. Soon the subject exhibits an equally strong impulse to color and to exaggerate when recounting simple incidents. This is a phenomenon which the untrained observer will readily confuse with the manifestation familiarly known as lying; but although the two are psycho-genetically related there is a very real and practical difference between them. At this time the person in whose charge the subject has been placed will do well to expose it at frequent intervals to a typewriter and an ample supply of stationery. (Early commentators recommend a pen or pencil, and even today it is impossible to state definitely which of these stimuli will be the most satisfactory.) If the subject is a true potential author, it will immediately employ these materials in the manufacture of verses or of brief prose passages usually of a philosophic and melancholy nature. When these activities have been repeated at frequent intervals during a period of three months or so the identification may be regarded as established. The specimen is a true author and its scientific training should at once be undertaken.

The immediate steps are to provide it with ample leisure and admiration as well as a reasonable degree of privacy. Under these stimuli it will function at increasingly frequent intervals, and it should now progress rapidly toward the second stage, which is known as

The Urge to Publish

Although the author is in many respects a self-sufficient organism, it apparently requires at all stages of its growth what may be roughly described as a psychic consort, technically known as the audience. The audience varies greatly in individual cases, and at first is extremely limited in size. Later on it increases, and it is most important that this increase should take place, for as a rule the successful development of an author is in direct ratio to the size of the audience. Rare cases have been known in which the author has functioned without any audience at all, and not infrequently authors have continued to produce at regular intervals with the assistance of a small audience only. If such an audience be both select and devoted, the author may attain considerable growth, in which event it cannot be regarded as wholly unsuccessful. In fact, French investigators have given to this phenomenon a specific name: that of *succès d'estime.*

At the beginning of its productive period the author will usually content itself with the

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admiration of the person in whose charge it has been placed, to whom is given the biologic title of Host. After a brief time however the need for a larger audience becomes evident and at this point the host will do well to enlist the services of a carefully selected group of neighbors. The author need not at once be brought into direct contact with this group. In fact the indirect approach is best both for the author and the Coterie, as the embryonic audience is called. A judiciously casual mention in the subject's presence of how greatly Mrs. M'Neish admired the "Lament for Dead Sailors" will go far in stimulating the author's Ego and thus increasing its verbal secretions. After a month or two of such oblique treatment the author will not shrink when exposed to the most lavish commendation. The subject should now be carefully prepared for the phenomenon of publication. It should be given minute doses of adverse criticism so that it will develop a proper contempt for any who disapprove of it. The venality or the fallibility of critics should be a frequent topic of conversation among those who are in its presence; and it should now be inducted into a familiarity with such concepts as popular taste, the judgment of posterity and the like.

Publication and Its Handling

When all this has been done the host may venture upon a tentative experiment in publication. The immediate objective should be the local newspaper—if the subject and its host live in a small community—or the school publication, or one of the small fraternal magazines, if the host or a member of the host's family belong to a fraternal order. Publication in one of the larger magazines is unwise at this period and private publication in book form should under no circumstances be attempted.

From the eighteenth year until maturity the care of the author is simple. If possible, it should be transplanted to a university where it will undoubtedly become part of a literary group. It should be liberally provided with books from which it will imbibe the raw material for its own subsequent products; and it should be encouraged to develop a Philosophy of Life.

Upon reaching maturity, as the phenomenon of graduation or expulsion from a university is sometimes called, it should be brought back to the home or, preferably, installed in a separate apartment, and immediately placed under the care of a reliable Literary Agent or an Editor or both. Thereafter the host may retire from the scene as rapidly as possible and assume no further obligations save financial ones.

Hints on Early Feeding

Thus far I have restricted myself to the discussion of the general care and training of the beginning author. It is now incumbent upon me to venture upon a far more complex subject, one which has been the occasion of the most acrimonious disagreement. It will be generally admitted, I am sure, that publishers and editors have carried the science of author-feeding to a more efficient stage of development than has any other class. Nevertheless the methods employed by these savants are not adapted to the requirements of the author in its pupal stage. The diet which the mature author can imbibe with impunity would be fatal to members of the same species during the period of growth. Moreover the indirect methods of feeding which are now so frequently employed, by publishers especially—methods which are known respectively as the Advance Royalty and the Subsidy—are impractical when introduced into the home.

So far as the feeding of the author in its infantile and later early stages is concerned no departure from ordinary procedure is necessary. It is only after publication has occurred that the matter of diet and the accompanying training require serious attention. Since the author, at this period, tends to become physically inactive in preparation for

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its future sedentary existence, it should be fed liberally with green vegetables, particularly with those which furnish roughage, such as broccoli and asparagus. Now is the time to break it in to the practice of Lunching Out, and now an extra hour of refreshment in the late afternoon should be added to its regimen. This hour is called Tea, after the beverage which was formerly consumed on such occasions, and it is most important for the author's future development not only that it be trained to go to tea regularly but also how to comport itself.

There are numerous amusing little tricks which the author can be taught to perform and these are best indulged in at tea. Among the most useful of these are Talking Shop, Meeting Literary Editors, Mutual Admiration, and Knocking Publishers. These accomplishments are very simple and may be learned by any author in a few brief lessons. In connection with going to tea the author should be taught When to Go Home. Many authors learn this readily enough, but there are always a few badly-trained specimens whose usefulness is impaired by their inability to depart from a social gathering at the proper time. As a result they frequently remain to dinner and on through the evening, thus disrupting the routine of the home in which the tea has occurred and imperilling their own functional efficiency. Such authors are known as Stayers.

Stayers may be cured by the simple expedient of transporting the scene of the tea to their own quarters. If the company at these teas consists largely of other stayers, the original stayer will be compelled to leave in self-defense, and thus develop a habit which will be useful to it on future occasions.

The diet by this time should be augmented by gradually increasing doses of one of the numerous alcoholic fluids which are procurable here and there. These fluids frequently take the place of more solid foods; they stimulate the imagination and enhance the ego. Familiarity with them is desirable on other counts as well, for without it any close relationship with editors and publishers is practically impossible.

It will be objected here that alcohol as a beverage is by many regarded as harmful and its use has even been held to be illegal. Although this contention in general is wholly sound, it does not apply to authors. It should always be borne in mind, that, biologically speaking, the author is a sport, and its sportiveness should not be curbed.

Feeding the Young Author

Prior to maturity the author should be encouraged to develop a taste for certain specific dishes. It is impossible to give an elaborate list here but a few suggestions may be noted. Among these are Spaghetti à la Louis-Martin, Suprême of Guinea Hen, Calves' Brains à la Yocum, Oeufs Rochambeau and Frozen Zabaglione. Female authors should also acquire a predilection for Melba Toast. This is a valuable food for wistful novelists of the male gender as well.

I have spoken before of the desirability of lunching out, but it occurs to me that this topic requires more extended discussion. As a rule lunching out falls into one of three categories, and the well-trained author is adept in each of them. These categories are (a) Lunching out with Other Authors (b) Lunching out with Attractive Members of the Opposite Sex and (c) Lunching out with Useful Persons—i.e., literary editors, agents, magazine editors and book publishers. For lunching with other authors and attractive members of the opposite sex the author needs no preliminary training and in maturity it may even forego these practices altogether. If it has been trained to meet literary editors at teas, its instincts will guide it successfully in lunching with them. Lunching with agents, magazine editors and publishers requires a special technique and the author should be drilled until it is thoroughly proficient.

The menus provided on such occasions

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vary slightly. The author should take one or more cocktails before embarking on solid food. This or these establishes (or establish) confidence and amiability. After cocktails, oysters, clams, hors d'oeuvres or onion soup gratinée may be taken, although none of these is obligatory. The entrée should be rich but insubstantial and should preferably be accompanied by a vegetable or fruit out of season. A dessert may follow, but the habit of taking desserts is not essential to successful functioning.

A few simple rules for deportment should be followed. When lunching with a literary agent, the author's demeanor should be unassuming. It should not appear to question the wisdom of any of the agent's activities, but should confine itself to a discussion of such topics as possible markets, terms, rates per word and advance royalties. The agent will usually instruct it in the matter of what the editors want. It is customary to lunch out with only one literary agent during any particular season.

No such restriction applies to lunching out with magazine editors and publishers. An author may lunch out with different members of these classes every day and not impair its efficiency. It is well to train the author to accept all invitations which may come to it from either of these sources, as frequent lunching increases productivity and opens up new avenues of publication. Prior to acceptance or publication the author's demeanor should be similar to that employed when in company with a literary agent. Afterward a change should immediately take place. Otherwise the editor or publisher may acquire a false sense of security.

Lunching with a magazine editor, although a more elaborate ritual than lunching with an agent, is still a comparatively simple matter. The author should at first be eager and grateful for acceptance, as the culmination of this meal is called, but if the lunches be repeated, the author should soon begin to object to the manner in which its product has been cut, the choice of the illustrator and the position which it has been accorded in the magazine. After a period of six months or so it should be taught to bring up the question of a higher rate.

Pre-Publication Conduct

Lunching with publishers is a very complex subject indeed, and an entire book could be written about it. The first lunch usually takes place prior to the signing of the contract. Since the publication of a book is a long-drawn-out affair, numerous luncheons will follow during the pre-publication period, and the author's conduct at each of these occasions should follow a carefully regimented plan. Prior to publication the menu should be simple: at the first meeting a salad, a small portion of cheese and one glass of wine—no more—should be taken. The author's conduct should be studiously naïve. It (the author) should listen carefully to what is said to it and even on occasion "register"—to borrow a term from an allied science—respect. When the publisher says—as he may,

A green vegetable diet is indicated due to sedentary existence

"When the book becomes a best-seller ——" the author should assume an expression of delighted humility but say nothing. When the publisher says—as he will, "Of course we cannot expect a large market for your book", the expression should remain the same. Little more instruction is necessary for the successful carrying out of the first luncheon.

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After the signing of the contract the author should be taught to inject a note of mild discontent into each succeeding encounter with its publisher. This discontentment should be directed toward the jacket design, the binding, the typography of the dummy, and the paper, as well as the catalogue description, but at no time during this period should it assume an active form, and a judicious mixture of admiration and gratitude for ALL THAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO FOR ME should leaven its tentative objections. Meantime the menu may grow more elaborate. Pheasant may be ordered occasionally, and the cheese may take an exotic form. The luncheon can now conclude with one of the more fanciful liqueurs.

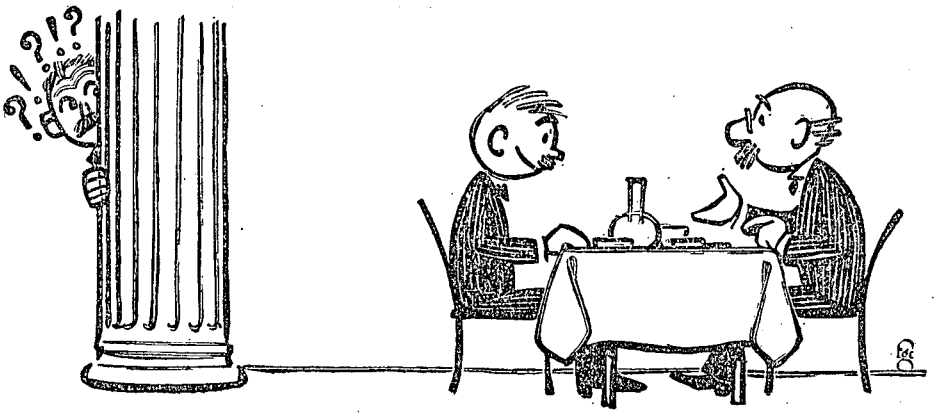
Post-Publication Suggestions

On the day of publication no note of acrimony should mar the concord between author and publisher. A slightly disparaging reference to the advance sale is permitted and a simple inquiry into advertising plans may be entered upon, but even this would be better deferred until a later occasion. Immediately after publication, however, the entire tone of the relationship between the two should be altered. The author should now be taught to enter upon a campaign of destructive criticism. It should analyze disapprovingly the advertising, and comment upon its inadequacy. It should reprove the publisher for every unfavorable review that has appeared and give evidence of indignation at the publisher's failure to secure prompter and more favorable attention in the papers. It should cite the case of a friend who has visited twelve leading bookstores in which the book was not displayed. The menu should be elaborate but consumed with an air of mild distaste.

At a later meeting the question why the book was not selected by one of the book clubs may furnish the basis for conversation, former criticisms should be repeated in more emphatic terms and the experiences of additional friends should be cited. If the author has been given a good grounding in the rudiments of post-publication conduct, it will not require detailed instruction upon its subsequent behavior. "When in doubt discuss advertising" is a good rule which covers a multitude of luncheons.

From now on the well-trained author should be trusted to conduct its own affairs successfully.

There remains for me only the task of stating one simple, inviolable rule. Three weeks after the rendering of the first royalty report the author should be seen lunching amiably with another publisher.



The author should be seen lunching amiably with another publisher

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WHO IS HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON ?

by Alice Henry

"Who is she?" "Where has she sprung from?" "Why does she write under a man's name?" everyone is asking about Henry Handel Richardson, after the great success of *Ultima Thule* here and in England.

If you were fortunate enough to visit Henry Handel Richardson in her home in the West End of London you would find a woman in her prime; tall, with dark waving hair and expressive eyes. A woman serious and composed, who would at once put you at your ease, ready to talk about her work only if you are interested. Although modest and unassuming, she gives the impression of having full confidence in her own powers, and of the strength that goes with great ability. She lives in her study in London, or in her summer cottage in Dorsetshire. She has her own circle of friends, but general society does not see her. And you will never meet her in any of London's various literary coteries. She is not even a member of a women's club. She rarely goes out in the evening lest it should tire her and affect the next day's work. For exercise she plays tennis, and, like the true Australian she is, she loves swimming.

Henrietta Richardson is a native of Melbourne. Brought up in a lively family circle, she has known also something of the freedom of Australian country life. The later years of her girlhood were spent in one of Melbourne's best schools, the Presbyterian Ladies' College. (That was a day when Ladies were looked up to.) Here she found rules aplenty, and restrictions that puzzled her sorely. Her school-days were later to furnish the material for one of her novels. Her family was musical, and she herself showed unusual musical talent. Her playing was excellent, but little suited to the pieces approved by the conventional teacher of the piano in a girls' school in the 'nineties. Although she often questioned in her own mind what was laid down as "the thing", both in manners and in music, she was a good student and graduated creditably. A cantata of her composition was performed on one commencement day—or "speech day", as it is called in Australia.

Miss Richardson was ambitious, and her father was ambitious for her. She herself rather leaned towards writing even then. As a child she was always scribbling—writing songs and stories. But the hopes of the family carried the day. At the age of eighteen she was entered, with their blessing, as a piano student in the Conservatorium of Leipzig. After nearly four years of close study and steady practice the girl took stock of herself and decided that, much as she loved music, she had no desire to teach it, and that she could never be a concert performer. She thinks now that perhaps she took up music too late. She had not lived all her life in a musical atmosphere where exacting musical standards were upheld, nor had she the early stern drilling in technique that good

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fortune had bestowed on many of her fellow students.

None the less the creative urge was there and striving for expression. With a small private income she was not driven to hack work. She took time to look around, lived for some years on the Continent, travelled a good deal, and prepared with a rare mingling of humility and self-confidence to give her energies to writing.

Her years in the Conservatorium had taught her that talent alone is not enough without hard work. She knew that her own gifts lay beneath the surface, and that if she was to move others it could only be after severe discipline. She had no facile pen. If she was to be a writer, she must learn to write. She studied: form and style and character, the conflicts among human beings, the struggle between human nature and baffling circumstance. She was equipping herself to express all she had seen during the years spent in a foreign community. Those years had been a profound experience. Even when attending classes or listening to concerts she had been observing closely her teachers and fellow students, the boarding-house keepers, the visiting tourists, and all the shifting population of a Continental university town. On this reserve she drew for the scene and characters of her first novel, *Maurice Guest*. *Maurice Guest* is not taken up with comments on operas and symphonies, or anecdotes of the great and near-great among composers and performers. It is concerned with character, as displayed against a colorful and revealing background. It was a daring first attempt; it threw down a challenge: "Here I am; here is what I have seen and know about my fellow human beings".

Miss Richardson had a morbid fear of being judged too tolerantly if it were known that she was a woman. A little twist of letters and words turned her name into a masculine form. Henrietta became Henry, Handel was drawn for its musical association, and as Henry Handel Richardson she faced the critics and the public. The ruse succeeded. The sex of the writer was never questioned. Only a man, it seemed obvious, could have understood and depicted so vividly the passion that bound Maurice to Louise Dufrayer in defiance to the call of his intellectual and artistic needs. A woman writer who selects a man as her chief character usually gives herself away.

The London critics were enthusiastic; not merely the rank and file of them, but princes in her own art, such as John Masefield. But Masefield warned her that she might have to wait ten years for general recognition. He was too sanguine. It took twenty.

The public was apathetic, and sales were small, but every now and then during the next ten years someone would quote from *Maurice Guest* or allude to it as a great book that had never quite "arrived". In 1922 it was reissued with an introduction by Hugh Walpole.

Her next book, published in 1910, was in a much lighter vein, and puzzled reviewers not a little. The gay satire of its title, *The Getting of Wisdom,* covered the story of a girls' college in Melbourne. "How," her readers wondered, "could a man know all about a girls' school?" The book ran easily and smoothly. It was amusing. The blunders and embarrassments of the raw country girl, the superior airs of the others, trifles about dress and girlish etiquette which only a woman would record, all were there.

An absurd incident arose out of this book. It might have been written of any girls' school of that period. But in Melbourne it was evident that the Presbyterian Ladies' College had been the model, and Miss Richardson was easily recognized as the author. When she was on a visit to Australia shortly after its publication she wished to visit her old school. But the school authorities were touchy. They were much wrought up by the cool and rather satirical comments upon the teaching, the table, and the general social at-

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mosphere. With unbelievable dulness, they refused to receive her. They might better have been enjoying the success of their brilliant student, rendering her the same honors that a few years earlier they paid to Madame Melba.

Miss Richardson was now ready to start her great work. She set herself to write, in a series of three novels, the story of the kind of immigrant who is a misfit in his new land. In her brain her hero was already in being. Naturally the scene was to be laid in her own country. In this Australian trilogy she must show steady growth and development up to the conclusion. She would cover thirty years in the life of a whole group, the lifetime of a generation—a stupendous undertaking.

Miss Richardson paid visit after visit to Australia. She talked with early colonists. She ransacked Victoria for government documents, out-of-print pamphlets and files of small town newspapers. She spent weeks in libraries and old bookstores and galleries, among faded and yellowed prints. This was partly for the sake of local color, but far more to catch and embody the human response to life's demands under significant conditions. It called for immense industry, for the story begins in the early 'fifties, in the days of the gold fever, and carries over into the 'eighties, and the books were to record the rapidly shifting scenes of a pioneer country.

We all look askance at sequels. The sequel is doubly handicapped. It rarely goes with the spring and verve of the earlier book, and it is apt to be judged by severer standards. But there is no question of sequels here. The complete trilogy, the *Chronicles of the Fortunes of Richard Mahony,* was planned from the beginning. The first volume, with the subtitle *Australia Felix,* appeared in 1917. The publication of the second, *The Way Home,* was long delayed, partly through ill-health and partly through the uncertainties of the after-war period. The third, *Ultima Thule* (the name of the Mahony home), had London publication last January, and went into three editions in a few weeks. It was published in the United States in the fall, and had an immediate success.

In these three volumes, about twelve hundred pages in all, we have the whole career of Richard Mahony, a young Irish doctor of good family, who emigrates to Victoria in the days of the first gold rush. On a mining field, near Ballarat, he keeps a general store; for people need daily supplies more than they need medical care. He marries a girl, young, sincere and capable. Eventually he again takes up his profession. He is a competent physician; and at last, after a good many trials and difficulties, becomes a successful family doctor with a large practice. But he is not a good mixer; he will not make himself known socially. With stern high principles, he invariably tells patients and patients' friends unpalatable truths, and so every now and then he loses some of his wealthier clients. He often imagines a slight where none was intended. How he resents being addressed as Mahóny! Is he not Richard Townshend Máhony? He makes life harder for himself than need be, and overworks as well. Finally he throws everything to the winds, sells his practice in a hurry, and goes off to England with his wife. Still, they have many happy years. Children come, and for some time there is plenty of money. They travel and live well. But Richard's restlessness keeps them on the move—from England to Australia and back again. But at last, cheated out of his colonial investments by an agent, he returns, a disappointed and broken man, to end his days in Australia.

Richard's wife, in the trilogy, is in direct contrast. With none of his intellectual grasp or esthetic taste, she has every quality that he lacks: courage, the determination to face facts, humor, tolerance, and an affection that more than matches his feeling for her. All these are his for the taking. Ten years older and far more versed in the world's ways, Richard for long retains his superiority. She comes at last to understand her husband's

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fatal defects as a provider and as a contented member of their little community:

"As time went on, she suffered strange uncertainties where Richard's decisions were concerned. In his good intentions she retained an implicit belief, but she was not always satisfied that he acted in the wisest way. Occasionally it struck her that he did not see as clearly as she did; at other times that he let a passing whim run away with him, and over-ride his common sense. And her eyes thus opened, it was not in Mary to stand dumbly by, and watch him make what she held to be mistakes. Openly to interfere, however, would have gone equally against the grain with her; she had bowed far too long to his greater age and experience. So, seeing no other way out, she fell back on indirect methods. To her regret, for in watching other women "manage" their husbands, she had felt proud to think that nothing of the kind was necessary between Richard and her. . . . Her enforced use of such tactics did not lessen the admiring affection she bore him; that was framed to withstand harder tests. Indeed she was even aware of an added tenderness towards him, now that she saw it behooved her to have forethought for them both. But into the wife's love for her husband there crept something of a mother's love for her child; for a wayward and impulsive, yet gifted creature, whose welfare and happiness depended on her alone."

More and more, from the time she recognizes this, Mary grows into a very great woman. One of their children dies. They are reduced to complete poverty and she has to support a family and a sick husband out of the paltry earnings of a country postmistress. She denies herself everything until even the edges of her sweet temper are rasped. But defeat she never accepts; she rises above difficulties and hardships. At the end, she still has her two little ones.

In all three volumes, on a first reading, it is Richard and Mary who stand out. But go back over the whole series and it will be seen that no one of the minor characters is ever neglected or forgotten. They live continuously in the writer's thought, although not always in sight. Richard and Mary do not stand apart as in the spotlight of a stage. They claim our first attention, but they move among fellow human beings.

What of the setting? Is it a true picture of Australia? Is this the Australian scene? The answer is that there is no one Australian scene, any more than there is one American scene. But *an* Australian scene forms the living background for this group of novels.

In Australia *Ultima Thule* has been received with as high acclaim as it deserves. But that the new land should be pictured, on the whole, as so unattractive—the realism of the pioneering days, when young Richard was roughing it in a mining camp, was all right—that Victoria of the 'eighties should be painted as crude, full of narrow social prejudices, without literary longings, with not even beautifully furnished homes, was resented in Australia very much as *Main Street* was resented in America.

Every now and then one realizes the writer's own homesick longing for the "illimitable blue distances", "the unearthly stillness of the bush". "To know, in exile, a rank nostalgia for the scent of the aromatic foliage; for the honey fragrance of the wattle; the perfume that rises hot and heavy as steam from vast paddocks of sweet, flowering lucerne—even for the sting and tang of countless miles of bush ablaze." But in all fairness it should be added that Miss Richardson is somewhat out of sympathy with her own country and is extremely critical of her fellow countrymen. She is more in sympathy with Richard's feeling than perhaps she herself knows. She has spent her whole mature life in Europe, and she is too honest to pretend to find happiness and satisfaction where she does not feel it.

Henry Handel Richardson is the most de-

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tached and impersonal of writers, although her sympathy with the figures of her brain is profound. She realizes how greatly they are the playthings of circumstance, of heredity or upbringing; but her way of sympathizing is not to express pity in words. She handles these poor puppets so skilfully that she produces in the reader a sense of the pathos and tragedy of life that is well-nigh overwhelming.

Her own qualities are displayed in her work; her powers of concentration; her absolute devotion to her art; her frank facing of life at its darkest and its hardest. But it is not so with her personal experiences of life, whatever they may have been. On these she is silent. One of the few passages wherein she has permitted herself the luxury of confession is therefore especially revealing. It is in the closing words of *The Getting of Wisdom*:

"She [Laura] went out from school with the uncomfortable sense of being a square peg, which fitted into none of the round holes in her world. The wisdom she had got, the experience she was richer by, had, in the process of equipping her for life, merely seemed to disclose her unfitness. She could not then know that, even for the squarest peg, the right hole may ultimately be found; seeming unfitness proving to be only another aspect of a peculiar and special fitness. But of the after years, and what they brought her, it is not the purport of this little book to tell. It is enough to say many a day came and went before she grasped that oftentimes, just those mortals who feel cramped and unsure in the conduct of every-day life, will find themselves to rights, with astonishing ease, in that freer, more spacious world, where no practical considerations hamper, and where the creatures that inhabit it dance to their tune; the world where are stored up men's best thoughts, and hopes and fancies; where the shadow is the substance, and the multitude of business pales before the dream."

THE BOOKS OF HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON

MAURICE GUEST, *Duffield,* 1909-1922
THE GETTING OF WISDOM, *Duffield.*
THE AUSTRALIAN TRILOGY
THE FORTUNES OF RICHARD MAHONY (AUSTRALIA FELIX), *Holt,* 1917. London, 1925.
THE WAY HOME, *Heinemann*
ULTIMA THULE, *Norton,* 1929

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TRADITION IN POETRY

by Edmund Blunden

In taking upon myself the task of defending Tradition in Poetry, I am under the necessity of appearing as an ancient and more or less venerable figure; others may come in aeroplanes, but I arrive on a bone-shaker; others may give a demonstration with electric stoves, but I freeze over my doleful brazier. Side-whiskers should have been worn. For tradition, in the eyes of many talented moderns, is what the comedians called "so most antimacassar". She is the mother of the antiquarians, the goddess of the belated, the spirit of the Sunday parlor where Martin Tupper's illuminated poems slumber with the padded photograph album on gray lace mats. It is this beldame who has most brutally refused to have the picture of the old rustic bridge by the mill taken down, and Signor Triangulo Martini's study of a modern beer-bottle put up in its place. She is always singing her muddled versions of Plantation Songs, but when her innocent daughter attempted to bring in a selection called "Le Chanteur de Jazz" she locked the piano. Willie came back from the University with a poem beginning:

> Gronk?
> What?
> Yes—
> I *said*
> Gronk;

everybody thought it original, but she sniffed, and remarked, "I think you might moderate your language".

Something like this, I am afraid, is the sketch of tradition which passes in some of the advanced circles. Others come perhaps to bury her, and I to praise her; but let us be quite certain of the identity of the deceased. Even her worst enemies allow her considerable merits, when it comes to the business of life. Those ladies and gentlemen who vociferate the necessity for beginning the arts all over again, for making the world's library and art gallery a desert and then indulging in a new creation, do not seek out the desert for their nearest suitable conditions of work. They are not wholly superior to tradition. When they think the coast is clear, they make love to her. They like the houses she has made, the gardens, the villages. They preach their gospel where she has during the course of many centuries prepared the right sort of tabernacles—her great national systems of civilization, for example, and her magnificently equipped cities, Paris, London, New York, Berlin, Vienna. It is only by virtue of tradition that the new style of a poet or sculptor has a chance, and is eagerly scrutinized—not so eagerly, of course, as an ideal commonwealth would ensure, but still not too coldly, in this disangelled existence. If we can suppose ourselves for a moment back in the prehistoric times, we shall not easily find a cultural curiosity such as would require and support our various literary supplements and journals, let alone Mr. Eliot's poems. By a long and gradual education man has arrived at that state where it seems second nature to

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be acquainted with literature, music, philosophy, criticism, and art at large; where experiment is not hopeless, because tradition is after all prepared to look at it, and to reject or modify or even to entertain it in the course of some years.

Experiment itself seems obliged to seek materials and implements from the stores of tradition. Considering poetry and the poet as our subject, we must ask ourselves what can be expressed, in what way, and to whom. The poet attempts the description, criticism, and fulfilment of life; or, since definition here is always sure to be argued over, we may say that he has emotional disturbances which require to be ordered into a calmness of achievement; or, being vigorous, he sings out of sheer glory, and being weary, he sings for luck and comfort. If these guesses at his secret may pass, we are to presume that the verse he writes will be rhythmical and musical (rhythm and tune being capable of endless variety), and united from first to last in a harmony or design of metre, not breaking away as though from the back of a wagon an irregular fall of sacks of coal was going on.

Verse, without further epithets, requires the sanction of natural movement; humanity cannot keep step with the noises of an accidental explosion in an ammunition dump. Ordered experience, recognizable rhythm—and, in addition to these, there is the melancholy fact that a poet must use known language. We may be sure that there is some sort of poetry in the communication of fishes, or the trumpeting of elephants, but we are incapable of borrowing those idioms, however aptly they might suit our unique emotions. A poet must employ the words and phrases that satisfy the mind and suit the throat of his fellow men.

In these three great problems incurred in the making of verse, tradition silently and powerfully intervenes. The poet is a noble creature, an epoch-making being, but behind him there is this mighty mother, and he is her poem. She brought him up, and in his impressible years gave him association, circumstance, sympathy, distaste, imagery, character—and probably bad handwriting. How much even of our emotions is our own? How much that stirs us is not due to the race, or family, or circle which sent us forward into the world? I cannot imagine that my own disposition is uncommon; I know from the evidence of my manuscripts that it is a poetical disposition, and an eager though not a fierce one; yet the things that have moved me, and the judgments I have formed, must be seen to originate in the type of life and feeling which I most fully experienced. Tradition, when, in the person of my old schoolmaster she chose to train me on the English plan, to insist on my learning closely the Old Testament, songs of "Cherry-Ripe" and "I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows", and maxims such as "Trifles even lead to heaven" and "Punctuality is the soul of business", decided my mental habit. I thought I could play truant from her and her everlasting lectures on character, but she was on the river and in the wood before me, bringing her barges along or bundling her faggots or calling me in her strong dialect. Among other things, she indicated that the Church was the center of the village and her calendar the essential year-book of man in nature; Easter was no ideal ceremony but the bright triumph of Spring; Advent was in every way the remedy, the hope of those dark and shorn weeks when life was drooping. She also assured me that shoeing horses and baking bread and hitting a cricket-ball were not so simple as they looked, and that we should get on faster if I observed certain points discovered by herself some considerable age before I was thought about. She even compelled me to keep a diary, recording the state of the weather, the news of the day, my private and public life, and my reading; and she saw that this was not skipped. In short it would require a separate volume to recount all the influences of tradition on the

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present witness, but it would be the best volume to accompany such attempts at poetry as came in due season. For she governed their sources.

For the matter of the poet's rhythm and versification, tradition is again an unescapable Elizabeth, or, as she has been more familiarly styled, Gammer Gurton or Mother Goose. First of all, there are those mysterious rhythms on which the world goes round and man, body and soul, with it. I shall not go so far as to assert that my latterly unpopular heroine organized those; the tide, the galloping horse, the homeward rooks, the wind in the corn, the pulse of the blood, the travelling cannonade of thunder, the play of echo, the tripping of deer, the poising of the hawk-moth—these and the multitude of primeval rhythms besides are older than herself. But she has from a very early date adapted these to the purpose of human utterance fit to be retained in the memory, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe", and we are as much her disciplined children in this respect as in the fact of our not calling for our lunch with a stone axe in hand. We begin experience to the tune of "Awake my soul", we close it to the tune of "Abide with me" or "O God, our help". We receive before we are aware of it an extraordinary miscellany of verse forms, from the nursery rhyme to the popular success of the music hall. We cannot evade it; our metrical consciousness is traditional. "Traditional" is not to be translated according to the versifying ambitions or discontents of an individual.

We may go on, and must go on, exploring the cave of harmony; the peculiar turn of each one's fate and insight will require an exactitude of response in verbal music; but the great series of metrical inventions which tradition has already evolved is almost capable of supplying the main rhythm and cadence for any one of our new instances of poetic passion. I am not the first by any means to point out that Gammer Gurton, though a stranger to limited editions and the disquisitions on prosody, could do almost anything she liked with a few dozen words of English.

I cannot avoid quoting some examples of her genius: *Experiments in Metre. By A Lady of England*—the original A.L.O.E. They are to be taken, for the moment, simply in reference to the notion I have been putting forward on traditional conditions of verse-craft. First, "The Bouncing Girl":

> What care I how black I be?
> Twenty pounds will marry me;
> If twenty don't, forty shall,
> For I'm my mother's bouncing gal.

Then, "The Tell-Tale":

> I will tell my own daddy when he comes home
> What little good work my mammy has done;
> She has earned a penny, spent a groat,
> And a hole is torn in the baby's new coat.

The last two stanzas of "Giles Collins and Proud Lady Anna":

> Lady Anna was buried in the east,
> Giles Collins was buried in the west;
> There grew a lily from Giles Collins
> That touched Lady Ann's breast, breast,
> That touched Lady Anna's breast.
>
> There blew a cold north-easterly wind
> And cut this lily in twain
> Which never there was seen before,
> And it never will again, again,
> And it never will again.

"Poor Robin" comes with a prophecy of Keats:

> The north-wind doth blow
> And we shall have snow,
> And what will poor Robin do then,
> Poor thing?
>
> He'll sit in a barn
> And keep himself warm,
> And hide his head under his wing,
> Poor thing.

"Pippen Hill" is Housmanish:

> As I was going up Pippen Hill
> Pippen Hill was dirty,
> There I met a pretty Miss

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And she dropped me a curtsy.
Little Miss, pretty Miss,
Blessings light upon you!
If I had half a crown in purse
I'd spend it all upon you!

"Dame Widdle Waddle":

Old Mother Widdle Waddle jumpt out of bed,
And out at the casement she popt her head
Crying,
"The house is on fire, the gray goose is dead
And the fox he is come to the town, oh!"

"The Man in the Wilderness" is in that run of verse which to my sense has always been most translucent, melodious, and natural in the work of Miss Sitwell:

The man in the wilderness asked me,
"How many strawberries grow in the sea?"
I answered him as I thought good;
"As many as strawberries grow in the wood."

And here is the syncopator in "Hinx Minx";

Hinx, Minx! the old witch winks,
The fat begins to fry:
There's nobody at home but jumping Joan
And father, mother and I!

The last of these very few of the casual ditties of old tradition—she merely throws them off for the nursery—reminds me of the most recent experiment in metre which I have met with. Mr. J. M. March's boxing-poem called *The Set-Up* comes from America, and since the English edition is "limited to two thousand copies" at half a guinea it is plainly considered something conspicuously new in verse. It is on this model:

The bell hammered,
Staccato,
Swift.
The announcer's arm began to lift.
He bellowed,
Mouth wide:
Turning from side to side:

"LA-A-DE-EES—AN'
Gents . . .
LA-A-DE-EES—AN'
Gents . . . "
His voice roared out;
Echoed;
Immense:
"The NEXT
BOUT
Of the EVENING
Will BE . . ."
". . . What's dat he says—?"
". . . Who—?"
". . . Don't ask me!"

It may appear odd, but the old lady accompanied the poet to the ringside. The twentieth-century independent is in the tradition.

There remains the gift, the inevitable element of words and turns of phrase, and once more no poet is asked to make something out of nothing. The new taste and the new situation require a fresh composition, but the race has perfected the resources of speech. It is given to few individuals to fabricate new words which become part of our conversation and our feeling, and those individuals are men like Coleridge with a particular philological comprehension, men whose startling life of ideas has been nourished from the beginning on the acquaintance of all types of talk and all literary methods. Immense assurance is needed by one who snubs tradition and her vocabulary and comes forward with his new coinage of quaintnesses and euphemisms. Meanwhile, if ever poets found the mystery of expressive word and idiom ready to their hands, they are the poets who write in English. They have only to keep their ears open, whether it is in the town street or the village inn, to make themselves masters of verb, adjective, metaphor, proverbial allusion, and other means of eloquence combining sound and sense like pony and van. Let them copy old Burton of the *Anatomy of Melancholy,* leaning over the bridge at Oxford and shaking his sides at the vigorous dialogues of the bargees. The "vulgar tongue", as it is called, is a work of genius, and even its violences should make a man desirous of equipping himself for pithy en-

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terprise with the pen rejoice at the imaginative accuracy of the comman man. The question before the house of bards is not what to concoct, but what to recapture out of the prodigious word-experience of the English-speaking man. We have all the linguistic gold that we, and our grandsons and our great-grandsons even more brilliant than we, can keep in beneficial movement.

It is when tradition herself fails, through some commotion or malady, that we lose sight of the economy of human achievement. When she, by the bad effects of industrial greed and European War, or by half-education, is not sure of herself, we suffer for it. In the eighteenth century the Briton built his house "From Halfpenny's exact designs": he appeared a trifle ridiculous in his solemnity, but his doors closed quietly, his fireplaces were generous, and his house-front looked out like a square of mild sunlight between his groves and garden walls. Halfpenny's designs costing too much to satisfy a new mania, we turned to plaster and disproportion; and now we have what is fairly described as the architectural obscenity of the vile medleys of tooth-paste and face-cream packages stuck along our highways, "residences". Something like this has been allowed to happen, in spite of Sir James Murray and the Fowlers, with the English language. A relaxed generation contents itself with, no, glories in, a farrago of vapid and dissonant expressions, which are applied more or less without alteration to all heads of interest. We see the superficial, and the worst incoherences of that, spreading "like danger in a wood". The analphabetism of the counterfeit gives us as a perpetual epithet the valuable indicatory word "nice", e.g.: "a nice cathedral"; the stirring verb "mix" ("she doesn't mix"); or "love" ("I'd love an Austin"). I will not pursue this leafless track, but return from it to the turnpike road of tradition, and ask whether the poets will stand for clear and various communication or the opposite. If they wish for an antidote to idiocy and an inspiration for sound recreation, let them go to a farmer's ordinary, a scientist's lecture, or an eighteenth-century schoolbook.

In fact, I will recite for them a passage, every way accordant with my own convictions on the nature of poetic inheritance and progress, from a schoolbook published in 1748. Even the title-page exhibits a seasoned discrimination of language which makes it a model even to the most visionary;

THE
PRECEPTOR:
containing
A General Course of Education
wherein
THE FIRST PRINCIPLES
of
POLITE LEARNING
are laid down
In a way most suitable for trying the GENIUS,
and advancing the
Instruction of YOUTH.

When we come to the "Lesson on Poetry", we may take with us the trivial and undistinguishing cant which a hundred modern reviews of verse cause to seem the only possibility, but it will soon fly like a mist before this sturdy sunlight:

"Tho' Invention be the Mother of Poetry, yet this Child is like all others, born naked, and must be nourished with Care, cloath'd with Exactness and Elegance, educated with Industry, instructed with Art, improved by Application, corrected with Severity, and accomplished with Labour and with Time, before it arrives at any great Perfection or Growth. 'Tis certain, that no Composition requires so many Ingredients, or of more different Sorts, than this; nor that to excel in any Qualities, there are necessary so many Gifts of Nature, and so many Improvements of Learning and of Art. For there must be an universal Genius, of great Compass, as well as great Elevation. There must be a sprightly Imagination or Fancy, fertile in a thousand Productions, ranging over infinite Ground, piercing into every Corner, and by

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the Light of that true poetical Fire, discovering a thousand little Bodies or Images in the World, and Similitudes among them, unseen to common Eyes, and which could not be discover'd without the Rays of that Sun. Besides the Heat of Invention and Liveliness of Wit, there must be the Coldness of Good Sense, and Soundness of Judgment, to distinguish between Things and Conceptions, which at first sight, or upon short Glance, seem alike; to chuse among infinite Productions of Wit and Fancy, which are worth preserving and cultivating, and which are better stifled in the Birth, or thrown away when they are born, as not worth bringing up.

"Without the Forces of Wit, all Poetry is flat and languishing; without the succours of Judgment, 'tis wild and extravagant. The true Wonder of Poesy is, that such Contraries must meet to compose it; a Genius both penetrating and solid; in Expression both Delicacy and Force; and the Frame or Fabric of a true Poem, must have something both sublime and just, amazing and agreeable. There must be a great Agitation of Mind to invent, a great Calm to judge and correct; there must be upon the same Tree, and at the same time, both Flower and Fruit. To work up this Metal into exquisite Figure, there must be employed the Fire, the Chissel, and the File. There must be a general Knowledge both of Nature and the Arts; and to go to the lowest that can be, there are required Genius, Judgment and Application; for without this last, all the rest will not serve Turn, and none ever was a great Poet that applied himself much to anything else."

Such is the style in which our tradition discusses an abstract subject, with a firmness of words never failing in aptitude, with a dramatic instancy yet no extravagance, and when a modern sees what he wishes to propound and has acquired that readiness of diction, he may go farther and introduce what novelty he will; he can be trusted not to use dynamite or cheap scent. Let us also refresh our memories in respect of tradition's acute sense of description, given an external object. We have lately heard Mr. D. H. Lawrence as a poet of natural history; he has won the bewildering superlatives of Mr. Middleton Murry for such experiments as his poem to the baby tortoise, and his worshipper, quoting the lines

> Alone, small insect,
> Tiny bright eye,
> Slow one,

observes that the piece "is lovely with a passion that all the sons of women have it in them to understand". I may be singular, but somehow I am still looking for the tortoise. The trouble is that I was made acquainted with tradition's ability to "notice such things". And I find actually more of poetry in, for example, the curt observations of Thomas Pennant on animals: "The cat, a useful but deceitful domestic: when pleased, purrs and moves its tail: when angry, spits, hisses, strikes with its foot: in walking, draws in its claws: drinks little: is fond of fish: the female very salacious; a piteous, jarring, squalling lover: the natural enemy of mice: watches them with great gravity: does not always reject vegetables: washes its face with its fore feet at the approach of a storm: sees by night: its eyes shine in the dark: always lights on its feet: proverbially tenacious of life: very cleanly: hates wet: is fond of perfumes; *marum, valerian, catmint.* The unaccountable antipathy of multitudes! beloved by the *Mahometans: Maillet,* who says that the cats of *Ægypt* are very beautiful, adds, that the inhabitants build hospitals for them". I have taken this quite ordinary example of traditional writing in order to illustrate the straightforward force of the language when it is modestly practised. I am only on the fringe of an immense subject, which may be comprised in few: new strength of diction can be best produced by a mature intelligence in the extant resources both printed and oral.

Tradition is not perfect, and may some-

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times have a dead hand. But though she approves and supports many things which could be vastly improved—though, according to an old French song,

> Hypocrisy and suave intrigue,
> Successful impudence and lying,
> Lawlessness with law in league,
> Talent in the gutter dying—
> Cant,
> Rant
> And superstition
> Are the favourites of Tradition—

still her merits far outweigh her faults. Viewed altogether, she is the edifice of experience, the constitution of our society, and the test of the future. In the sphere of the arts, she may appear as a grim Johnsonian critic, but she will listen to genius, because she knows that genius has listened to her though he may not have been aware of it. She herself is astonished and aggrieved when a steam-engine advances, leaving the driver of the stage-coach snapping his whip at the posturing smoke; or when the broadcasting program makes her lament the days of the silent evenings, interrupted by the old village bells; but she sleeps on it, and before long decides that the times are as good as they were. Her sentiment can never be outraged by what is shaped and revised according to the laws of evolution; she has only to look at a poster in the Subway, setting forth the means of transit through the ages, to feel at home in 1929 as in 1829; she may see even her stage-coach disguised as a bus. It is little different in the province of innovation and experiment on the part of the musician, the painter, and the poet. We cannot, unless we are creatures of the cave, the tripod, and the oracle, see clearly the works of art which she will choose to preserve out of the swarm of endeavors endlessly surrounding her; but the past can assure us that in all that is destined to survive there will be found no hysterical, miraculous, demon-begotten departure from the past. The leap forward will have been made possible by a steady and accurately judged jumping-off place. In its preparation there need be no feverish anxiety or palaver about the future style of civilization. On this ground many modern talents come to grief; the terror of seeming five minutes behind next Friday distracts and exhausts. Those with things to say spend their enthusiasm in distorting the ways of saying them. So a village boy with a telegram to deliver trains a goat to accompany him, with a satchel round its neck, and in that the telegram—if the goat has not contrived to eat it on the road.

I have said that the past can assure us how far poetical discovery and adventure is related to what was previously ascertained and imparted. Poetry is a family, and her genealogical tree may be investigated with patience and reward. Sometimes a particular branch of this family is remarkable for a rich succession of "likenesses" in difference. If we trace Virgil or Milton through posterity, we shall be busy for many years; from their fountain-heads (yet those fountains were supplied from their predecessors in usual measure) many a fine stream of verse went its own way through the personalities and emotions of other poets, long since recognized as masters. I should like to close my wandering thoughts on the newness of poetical action that is always implicit in a devotion to former excellence, with references to the work of some whose genius is unmistakably original and kindling with revelation. Time allows us now a perspective of such a phenomenon as Blake. We know his hand, "the trick of that voice we do well remember". We see him single in the field, or attended only by his angels. But poetically he is not unaccompanied; the Elizabethan dramatists with their lyrical enjoyments and splendid panoramas of fate and mortality are there. A figure who might not be expected in such company is there also. Watts's Hymns are no longer the common knowledge of England, but in Blake's time they were so,

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and he transfused their celestial moments into his own visionary illuminings.

Come, lead me to some lofty shade,
Where turtles moan their loves;
Tall shadows were for lovers made
And grief becomes the groves. . .

Jesus! the God of might and love
New-moulds our limbs of cumbrous clay;
Quick as seraphic flames we move,
Active and young and fair as they.

Our airy feet with unknown flight
Swift as the motions of desire
Run up the hills of heavenly light
And leave the weltering world in fire. . .

There are many stanzas like these in Isaac Watts, which have their soft but clear echoes in Blake's lyrics.

Coleridge again is known as a poet new in his own day and new in ours; he was continually experimenting, and in metre his experiments set free a countless host of melodies; almost, one might say, a fresh prosody. But even this magician did not experiment without the help of his old friend Tradition. We do not take away any of the life and spring of his

Never, believe me,
Appear the immortals,

when we realize that the origin of this freedom is a German lyric; nor when we know that a German folksong underlies "Something Childish but very Natural" is the charm broken. Repeating with pleasure the stanza beginning

Once again, sweet Willow, lave thee!
Why stays my Love?

we are repeating what was suggested by the Welsh air "All Through the Night". Even "Christabel" is rhythmically a renovation and enrichment of nursery-rhyme measure. And there is that apparently unprecedented and inimitable poem "Kubla Khan"—from the air, from the wood beyond the world? Let Coleridge himself give his statement on the genesis of "Kubla Khan":

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in "Purchas's Pilgrimage": "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall". The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has thé most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort.

Summertime in the country, to be sure, and a solitary place, and the anodyne, and Purchas, and the genius of dreams, are all felt as presences in the ensuing fantasy which surpasses all our fantasies; but that is not all. For rhythmical sequences and surprises, for verbal music and ideal scenery, Coleridge's secret recollection of two poems by William Collins (themselves descended in some characteristics from Dryden), must partly have our thanks. Those poems are the "Ode on the Passions", with its "prophetic sounds" of the "war-denouncing trumpet", its music of instrument and nature,

Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole;

and the "Ode on the Poetical Character", which Coleridge honors in an early preface, and

Where tangled round the jealous steep,
Strange shades o'erbrow the vallies deep,
And holy genii guard the rock,
Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock.

Without pausing to elaborate this—I imagine that is all done in Professor John Livingston

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Lowes's *Road to Xanadu*—I hasten on to find Milton's great ghost and oriental vision joining in the symphony, whether in the reminiscence of

Southward through Eden went a river large,

. . .

Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill

. . .

Passed underneath ingulphed,

to "rise a fresh fountain and with many a rill Water the glade"; or of other, or all his landscapes of romance and wonder.

In pointing out some of the contacts between Coleridge's voyage of discovery and the ports of tradition, I must not be mistaken as belittling the splendor of his newness or as being blind to the individuality of the poem. Coleridge was necessary and only Coleridge. But (to paraphrase Browning's not very beautiful question) could Coleridge grow up without porridge? It may be objected to tradition that when her bewildering child presented her with "Kubla Khan" she struck him in the face. Enter, in short, the *Quarterly Review* for September, 1816. *Quarterly* speaks:

> It was in the year 1797, and in the summer season. Mr. Coleridge was in bad health;—the particular disease is not given; but the careful reader will form his own conjectures. . . . In that farm-house, he had a slight indisposition and had taken an anodyne, which threw him into a deep sleep in his chair (whether after dinner or not he omits to state . . .). The lines here given smell strongly, it must be owned, of the anodyne; and, but that an underdose of a sedative produces contrary effects, we should inevitably have been lulled by them into forgetfulness of all things. Perhaps a dozen more lines such as the following would reduce the most irritable of critics to inaction.

And so on—"utterly destitute of value", "not a ray of genius". In spite of this bad beginning Tradition had to admit "Kubla" to the album, and presently the two got on famously together; so now we may stand looking for a "Kubla Khan" of our days, and if our poets are as traditional as Coleridge we may receive one.

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THE YOUNG CRITICS OF THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES

by Gorham B. Munson

I AM going to publish a dream, something that by "knowing" persons is no longer done. About seven years ago my first opus, a little monograph on the peculiar merits of Waldo Frank, announced among its pages of "front matter" that the author had in preparation a book entitled "Introducing the Twenties (A Series of Critical Studies)". No one has ever inquired what became of the projected work, but perhaps that is because it was easy to guess that the title represented only a dream.

It seemed to me in those days that the coloration of current literature in the United States was due to change very remarkably. I had read in 1921 an exciting essay by Malcolm Cowley in which he described the new aims of the "youngest generation", specified as comprising S. Foster Damon, Slater Brown, John Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings and Kenneth Burke, and how they nourished themselves not on the tradition of yesterday but on the traditions of several centuries ago, how they mingled with this traditionalism a love of strangeness, and how fascinating to them were abstract problems of form and style. Later I had talked with Kenneth Burke and heard him remark to William Carlos Williams that the young men of the 'nineties had been bachelors and had gone in for intoxication in art, whereas the young Americans of the 'twenties were married men and wished for a quality of solidity in their art. Glenway Wescott, I recall, had come to New York and told of the reaction carried on by Yvor Winters, Mark Turbyfill and himself against the "City of the Big Shoulders" school of Chicago writers. In their little reviews the new *jeunes* went on the warpath against the *Dial,* Mencken and Sherwood Anderson.

That fresh impulses did arise in American literary life at this time requires no argument now: readers of THE BOOKMAN need only to consult the survey, *American Poetry Since 1920,* written by Allen Tate (January, 1929), and the summing up by Kenneth Burke entitled *A Decade of American Fiction* (August, 1929), to have before them the evidence that motives differing very much from those that ruled such writers as Masters, Sandburg, Dreiser and Van Wyck Brooks have animated their young challengers. But in my dream I thought that *les jeunes* would find themselves more quickly, blossom, triumph over the Middle Generation, and rearrange their literary scene—all within a few years! Nothing like that happened. The once rebellious Middle Generation remained firm in its entrenchments. A number of the younger men "cracked up" in flight or scattered. There were brilliant solo performances—usually, like Hart Crane's *White Buildings* or Cummings's *The Enormous Room* or Burke's *The White Oxen,* not widely appreciated—but the Young Generation as a whole failed to acquire the weapons it needed to make its impress. For example, unlike the generation which preceded it,

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it has never had control of a magazine with any resources and any size to speak of. The decade of the 'twenties ends with the old spirit, not the new, dominant.

However, the old spirit which felt itself so young in 1916 (time of the *Seven Arts* and the *Masses,* time of the "vers libertines" and mushroom psycho-analysts, time of Greenwich Village and little theatres) now feels old and disillusioned. Come, young and old, let us wash our minds in the tepid waters of the melancholy of *The Modern Temper*. Let us sit by the dying fire and watch the old decade out, brooding on our failures and saying with Joseph Wood Krutch: "The world may be rejuvenated in one way or another, but we will not".

But is this the part of writing men, to indulge in futile regret, to throw good money after bad? If so, then writing itself, which is an art of ceaseless struggle with great and small difficulties, is not for us, and we had better seek a softer occupation. I had intended to say how weak and insufficient I thought we younger critics are (so too are almost all of our elder critics), but on consideration that does not seem the best thing to point out. What we need is a clearer limning of our problem, the invitation to solve difficulties we have overlooked, the challenge of formidable undertakings. I will try to outline a stiff but not insoluble problem for us, because, strangely enough, there is nothing like a hard assignment to raise the spirits. In the course of describing the problem, the younger critics will incidentally be brought within our view.

But by younger critics I should say here I do not primarily mean those critics who are pretty well along in their thirties and who have merged successfully with their immediate predecessors, who have "arrived", in short. One feels, for instance, no pronounced break in tendency and in latent assumptions when one reads Mark Van Doren and Joseph Wood Krutch after reading Van Wyck Brooks or Francis Hackett or Carl Van Doren. There are some to whom Lewis Mumford is a windy Brooks and others to whom he is a greater Brooks. Thomas Beer with his impressionistic picturesqueness, his almost stilted manner, his air of impertinence (often sustained incidentally by clubbing the cultivated or pseudo-cultivated with the implements of the lowbrow and, vice versa, by attacking the lowbrow with the rapiers of the intelligent, shifting back and forth without clearly defining his own loyalties)—Thomas Beer seems more at home in the generation that produced Hergesheimer than in the one that produced Cummings. Edmund Wilson, for all of his awareness of changes that might be brewing among his juniors, I include with Mark Van Doren, Krutch, Beer and Mumford. This is because there is something unpronounced about the quality of his work that lets it blur in with the main critical chorus.

Of Gilbert Seldes I make an exception. The heavily serious and the pretentiously frivolous seem to join in being unjust to his gifts. He is light and agile, and the serious-minded therefore put him down as superficial. He is sharply intelligent, and this appears to alienate the mere "cleverists". Actually, he is a roving critic, brightly independent, very well informed, and expert in making discriminations in the arts of levity and diversion, so much less charted and therefore so much more risky to the critical taste than the serious arts. I would not say that he assimilates very well with the kind of thing that Mencken represents, but on the other hand he was never in the forefront of the contributors to *The Little Review*. An independent.

But the critics I have in mind come just after these men, and some of them, I think, are or will be more important. To the construction of their problem, then; and let us take note of the junior critics as the scaffolding goes up and it seems appropriate to introduce them. We shall try to build brief replies to these questions: what audience should

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the young critic write for? what practical object should he keep in mind? what theory of values should he uphold? I do not mean that there is only one reply for all the young critics to each of these questions, but that there is a reply appropriate to each one of them.

For example, as critics, Kenneth Burke, Yvor Winters and Allen Tate appear most often to be writing for an audience of writers. They presuppose in their readers a good deal of acquaintance with literary theory and a good deal of professional acumen. They do not hesitate to enter into very technical matters and generally take up in a complex way rather advanced topics. To size of public they prefer quality of understanding, and they achieve some influence—on writers. Now it is very desirable to have grow up in our milieu a group of acute technical critics (we have sorely required them!) but obviously the choice of a purely literary public will not do for all the young critics. It is too confining to be always in the workshop: one loses sight of the aims of literature as one concentrates more and more on the intricacy of the means: there is a natural desire to engage with ampler ideas and to write about them for publics that are more disinterestedly seeking profit in what is written. What, then, if one tries to pass outside the professionally literary? There are disaffected minorities that can be reached—some small, like the little family of extreme radicals, some relatively large, like the amorphous politically liberal reading public, but all disaffected, chewed up in the blind wheels of American life, and protestant (impotently protestant, one might add). A young critic like V. F. Calverton aims precisely to reach the socially discontented. In a trim style, he brings to them the store of social literary criticism he has assimilated—with Marx and Plechanov standing out prominently in his background—and he pursues his public with vigor. He keeps a certain current of thought alive (though one disagrees one may still, for reasons, say "more power to him"), but is not the distinguishing trait of this series of socially protestant publics its inertness? Within their sphere the writers who study Burke and Winters and Tate *act* on suggestions, but the suggestions do not carry them far. Calverton offers more far-reaching views, but his public is not an acting one—as yet, anyway.

The question of an audience is not a simple affair, as we can see if we imagine Matthew Arnold to be alive today and wonder for whom he would write. He appeared just in time to have available an educated governing class on whom to press his argument for a transformation of the national culture, but today, fifty years later, is there a governing class that is also educated? Would not Arnold, who did not wish merely to stimulate a few writers with small followings nor to nourish rebellious weak minorities but rather to address influential people, now throw up his hands in bafflement as he gazed about at the legislators and educators of our day? An intelligent public with social power, an influential educated class—it may be staring our young critics in the face, but I do not believe that any of us have envisaged it. Yet there are some, I fancy, who eventually will try to seek out just such a public or will write as if such a public existed. Is this last not already true of the papers on Sherwood Anderson, Upton Sinclair and Robinson Jeffers which Lawrence S. Morris has contributed to *The New Republic*?

It seems to me, however, that we must take our public where we can find it and then—try to educate it! Of course, I need to defend myself against sounding presumptuous. What I mean is that the modern reader is in a predicament and we might give a little sympathetic attention to his difficulties and try to help him to improve his technic of reading. But no one to my knowledge has given a clear picture of the predicament of the American reader! * We write at him in the dark,

* See on this point *Practical Criticism* by I. A. Richards. (Harcourt, Brace).

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unaware of his elementary troubles over standards and current valuations, the simple business itself of interpreting what he reads, the relation of literature and activity and so on, and he, confused from the very beginning, sends back to us from the dark the most astounding irrelevancies. *Our times call for the critic as educator.* But first we need to know what it is we propose to educate, and then we shall need to play upon its latencies not only of response to the beautiful art of letters but still more upon its latencies for initiative in the fine art of living. "Good thoughts," said Emerson, "are no better than good dreams unless they be executed."

Here I note that already the question of a practical end-in-view for the young critic has arisen. Too often the young critic has been merely a partisan, fighting to establish a new author or to dethrone an old, or championing one of the minor contemporary tendencies: there has been a collection of things he was enthusiastic about demonstrating, but the items have not straightened themselves out toward some large and far-away objective that he was consistently striving to reach. It will make my meaning clearer if I say that V. F. Calverton has such an objective (whether it is a fallacious one or not is another matter); observe how all his writing bends toward one end, the bringing into existence of a sweeping social reform. But there are of course many other equally arduous aims that could be proposed. The elevation of general literary taste, adopted as a conscious lifetime programme, is one, and I hope no one imagines that *that* is not a gigantic and exceedingly difficult design, demanding the utmost craftiness. Or, for a further instance, a war of attrition against the theory and practice of self-expression as vitiating the very nature of the writer-reader contract might be proposed.

I mention these examples because it appears to me that we young critics can justly be accused of a lack of breadth and a lack of elevation. Never mind for the moment whether or not this is true of our elders; it is true of us, and at least we have the excuse of immaturity. But we shall not attain to sweep and power unless we begin now to try to exercise them.

For the sake of pointing these remarks, take the case of Henry Hazlitt. He is an adherent of no particular school, he is delightfully cool and reasonable and well-informed and self-respecting in his weekly reviews in the New York *Sun,* he can deal staggering body-blows at meretricious authors, but has he what one might call a North Star by which he steers his critical course? Would not his whole work tone up, increase in conviction, go further, if always he were returning to a leading idea, if always he were writing to effect some almost impossible ulterior object? As it is, he is an excellent middleman between author and reader, efficiently performing the kind of service appropriate to a newspaper literary page.

Let us leave this matter of what in the last analysis the critic is trying to accomplish for a short glance at the third question, what should his theory of values be? What does he stand for? It must be for something,* and the more defined this something is to him the better. Run over the list of young critics and fledgling critics, those that I have already mentioned and ten or a dozen more, such as C. Hartley Grattan, Jean Toomer, John Riordan, C. P. Fadiman, William Troy, Hansell Baugh, Edwin Seaver and T. S. Matthews. The results will show an interesting lack of definition. T. S. Matthews, for instance, adopts a straightforward workmanlike attitude toward letters: he is commonsensible, a good writer-in-the-making, perhaps of the stamp of Arnold Bennett. He is clear on the underlying basis of writing, namely, that it is a form of communication analogous to speaking. Others—Toomer, Riordan and Morris—hint at a background of philosophic ideas. They are skeptics *and* af-

* See again I. A. Richards, but this time his *The Principles of Literary Criticism.* (Harcourt, Brace).

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firmers, a combination that bodes well for the later development of their thought. Others like Allen Tate and Yvor Winters hover toward an esthetic philosophy with odd admixtures. This is very sketchy, I am well aware, but is it quite called for here to dwell in detail on formative points of view? One looks rather for certain qualities of conviction and passion, one speculates on where this energy is likely to flow. But the general impression I have is that with a very few exceptions we younger critics are not as deeply engaged in discovering, testing, elaborating a system of values as we might naturally be expected to be. Too many of us work along merely on *idées reçues,* content with what Nature has given us in the way of a temperament and a mind.

Well, there as I see it is the young critic's primary problem in its separate aspects of the choice of an audience, the selection of an object to be carried out, the discovery of values to stand for, and by the extent to which this not-easy problem is unsolved, we can measure ourselves—and quarrel with ourselves. If our dissatisfaction becomes intense enough, we may make the nineteen-thirties a far stronger decade in criticism than the nineteen-twenties. I discount hopefulness, but I should say we ought to come through, for there is certainly enough talent among us to stand a deal of hard driving.

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THE SHAME

by Fiswoode Tarleton

ANOTHER morning he's lifted gently out of sleep by the whines of his hounds in their pacing around the stanchion floor. Another morning, as on all mornings, Teff Fallon opens his eyes to stare first at the unoccupied half of the old cherry bedstead, then at the mildewed saddlebags hanging from a peg on the wall, the spinning wheel in the corner of the windowless cabin, the mail-order-house stove, and the tottering hickory bark chairs, old chairs that seem to have withdrawn to dark corners like aged people desiring shadows and peace.

The open door of his cabin shows him again the pawpaw grove on the short slope in front of the cabin, the sycamores that stand high and straight along the creek banks, the top of the high ridge across the waters, the trail that meanders up to the ridge-top, winding in and out among the high beeches and pines. He hears the soft lapping of the waters of Meddlesome Creek which always reminds him of the slow, perfunctory, endless drinking of dogs.

When Teff pushes his long legs out of bed and pulls on his jean pants and boots his dogs stop their pacing and stretch out on the floor in front of his feet, beg with their eyes now, beg and speak with their eyes. Eyes charged with old memories, memories of long mountain nights, running the foxes until feet became sore and bellies were empty so that in a lonely cove their master might listen to their bayings by the hour, and play the game of placing each dog's position in his mind. The eyes of the hounds, the two potlickers and the half-breed Walker, say plainly that they haven't forgotten the long nights.

Eyes charged with memories send Teff to the ancient, mountain-made cupboard, cut and turned way back in time, and following him, eyes make him cut off larger than usual chunks of pork-fat and fling to the hounds.

He sets about getting his own breakfast. Fries slices of hog meat and dampens the cold corn pone with grease. Makes his chicory-coffee and sitting down eats mechanically. Now and then he hears the splashing of mules in the creek-bed road and the tapping of iron shoes on the rocks, and as always he hears the "whoas" of the Meddlesome Creek men as they pull their mules to a halt above his cabin for another look at the ruins.

"It's been a month and none of them gets tired of looking at the ruins," he tells himself.

He rises and throws the scraps to the hounds. They follow him out the door and around the back of the cabin swallowing the lumps in their throats. They follow him through the thick beech-woods and stand with him behind a patch of high rhododendron. They stare with him through the low foliage at the ruins of his old cabin and watch with him the moving forms of hillmen who left their mules to explore among the ashes and the charred scrub. His neighbors still hunting, hunting for bones, hunt-

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ing for a sign or signs, hunting for something that belonged to his woman, his girl wife, turning over the ashes with their boot-toes, day by day exploring every inch of the ground even to under the beeches and hickory trees that felt the kisses of the flames and died.

Ruins of his past. Like shadow fragments the charred bits of wood, that were once strong beams and flooring and uprights lie scattered over the clearing. And burned branches of trees that were green but couldn't support the leaning flames lie about where they first flung themselves into grotesque gestures.

While Teff Fallon waits for the hillmen to depart from the scene, waits for them to tire of turning over the ashes in a vain effort to find something they might bring to him, waits for them to think of other attractions at Pennyroyal settlement and move to their dreaming mules that stand with lowered heads in the waters of Meddlesome, his mind pictures again the ruins as they smoked and cracked, on the day he first saw them, came upon them and the hill folks standing around. He remembers the feeling he had on returning from Pennyroyal that afternoon a month back when he saw the smoke down the creek-bed road, smoke rising from where his cabin should be, and he remembers failing, as he rounded the bend, to see the chimney of his cabin. He remembers the ashes that grayed his mule as he beat him into a trot in his hurry, and the gritty feel of the laurel as it whipped his bared arms in his run up the slope to the ruins.

The neighbors standing around, some poking among the hot ashes with green hickory sticks. Nobody said anything. Pity and sorrow that lie way down in a hillman never reached lips. But they all helped as they saw him coming, all got green sticks, men, women and children and poked among the ruins. Pantomime of primitives turning over smoking embers, knowing the only thing worth finding for him, knowing the shallowness of words and the eloquence of proof. The silent hunt . . . for . . . her!

And as he now watches the hillmen poke around after the ashes are cold, after a month of hunting, he says to himself, "they still think she *was* there and that some of her *is* there. They still think she perished all but maybe her bones. They still think they will find something to hand me that says she laid her body down. But I know better. The stones lying there in a heap didn't burn. That little stone jar I caught her with that day wouldn't burn. We'd have found the jar if she had perished, even if her bones had gone, all the stone would have stayed. Fire won't burn stone".

He sees the hillmen stop turning over the ashes with their boot-toes and return to their mules. They ride off, whispering among themselves. One of his potlickers whines from his haunches and lifts his nose upward; gum-eyed dog having a flick of memory of something sniffs the air which is still charged with the breath of blackened wood pores.

Voices reach Teff's ears as he takes a step through the undergrowth toward the ruins, voices of two hill boys, rising sometimes in the uncertain, changing notes of adolescence. Teff stoops behind the laurel, a frown on his face.

"Geeamighty," says one of the voices, "hit's shore bad ter git yer up a purty gal an' she's fire-burned."

"Effen this-un gits himself up a gal haint a-goin' ter be ary kerosene-oil in my shack. My pap reckoned Uncle Teff's woman war a-foolin' with kerosene oil. My pap said he smelt oil fust thing."

"Hùh, air we-uns a-goin' hunt fer bones ag'in?"

"Caint find bones. Reckon Uncle Teff find bones an' bury 'em."

"Wal, I'm a-tellin' yer I haint a-goin' be 'roun' hyar when shadders come."

"You-un afeared o' hants?"

Something rises from way down in Teff Fallon suddenly; a revolt surging through

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his blood mounts to his head. His face burns from the heat of an inner fire. The thin voices of the two boys, his nephews, who come every day to talk about bones and hants, always fan to high heat the fire that rises from way down in him.

With two quick motions he seizes a stick and whirls it. The whir of it as it sails over the boys' heads sends them leaping toward the creek-bed. The crash of it in the bushes seems to boost them across the sluggish waters; their shirts up to their shoulders, their naked bodies glinting.

Followed by the hounds he makes his way through the undergrowth and stands on the edge of the ruins. As always when he stands there his mind again picks up his troubles, his grievances in order. First, the Fourth of July picnic in the grove in Pennyroyal Settlement. The orations by the commonwealth's attorney and Old Judge True. The games. The man in store clothes. It seems only yesterday when he saw that man, that Goliath O'Gowd, strutting there at the picnic in his store clothes, showing off, strutting before the hill girls and making up to them so easy. Goliath O'Gowd who left his own Meddlesome country to go and work in the mines at Anathoth, the railroad town. Goliath who threw away money, buying presents and eatables for girls.

As vivid as an actual picture the scene of Teff's own woman making up to Goliath comes to him. The laughter of his woman resounds now in his ears, her unbecoming hilarity as she mixed with the games and fell in with the man in store clothes. Her strategy which always managed to keep her near the O'Gowd man. Goliath's feeling of his smooth-shaved face and twirling of his heavy watch chain as he said words to his, Teff's, woman, said them low and soft so they wouldn't fall around for anybody to pick up.

And watching his hounds absently as they wander among the ashes, Teff Fallon recalls as the third scene her coming home with him after the picnic and celebration. Her silence as she rode behind him on the mule. Her silence that lasted until the next day and the next and the next, silence that never ended except when she had to answer questions. Her dreaming over the cooking and washing. Her leaning on her hoe for minutes at a time as she cultivated the corn. Silence and dreams as if she had only her body present and was living far away.

The fourth episode. Her only smile since he took her to the picnic in the Pennyroyal grove. An afternoon: a week after the Fourth of July. He had returned from his woodcutting unexpectedly, because of the heavy rain storm. He had peered through a chink in the cabin; saw for the first time the small stone jar in her hand: its red contents seeming to glow. At first he had thought its reflection was on her face as she stood before the shining bottom of a tin pan looking at herself. He saw her take some of the red stuff from the jar on her finger and spread it on her cheeks and her lips. When she smiled her lips opened like a knife wound. Her teeth shone.

She hadn't looked for him to come home before his time. He had thought he would take her by surprise and as he left the chink to go into the cabin, a punishment had crept into his mind. He had thought to blacken her face with charcoal and hog-fat, then make her look at herself and see the color of her soul. The same punishment his pappy had thought out for the painted women of Anathoth, the railroad town, the women who hang around the restaurants with glowing faces, while the mechanical pianos grind out their music, who flaunt their legs below knee-high skirts and cut their hair as short as a man's. Teff can hear his pappy's voice now saying, "I seed harlots a-fotchin' thar sinful bodies. I seed harlots a-standin' in shadders in Anathoth, thar faces a-fire with devil scarlet. I heerd the women of Anathoth seduce men who passed thar shadders: I heerd the words o' thar lips. I heerd voices like honey an' saw men ensnared. An I thought on

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anointing thar faces with charcoal and hog-fat."

But, as he took his eyes away from the chink in his cabin and started toward the door to catch her in her scarlet marks, another thought had checked him. He had found himself suddenly wanting the man, the tempter, Goliah O'Gowd in his store clothes, who must have given her the little stone jar the inside of which glowed with red fire of sin. He had found himself suddenly wanting to find them together. He had realized that if he came upon her then his chances would be spoiled. He had returned to the chink for another look and again saw the reflection of her face in the shiny bottom of the tin pan she had fastened on the cabin wall, and he saw the little jar in her hand, its dull red glow a strange, undying ember. He saw its faint red light seem to rise and throw a spot on her faded gingham as she held it in the palm of her hand close to her breast; and as her finger again went into the jar his eyes caught a flick of fire as she brought her finger to her lips and deepened the red lips that looked like a wound.

So he hadn't come upon her with surprise. He just withdrew to the fringe of the beechwoods and called his pigs. And when he entered the cabin later she was standing over the mail-order-house stove, cooking her victuals, her face the palest thing in the room.

As he stands there now, a month after the tragedy, watching the ruins absently, his eyes catch a small pile of charcoals blown into a laurel pocket on the edge of the surrounding forest. He goes over, gets down on his knees, and lifting each burned piece, inspects it. The one spot he had missed examining heretofore reveals nothing. There's no blackened jar, not a fragment.

He tells himself, "If I had found the jar I'd know she was dead and gone. The Baptists said she rose in a chariot, went to heaven a good woman. The Baptists said I would be seeing her there and that I would understand then about the fire taking her. I would know about all the fires and the floods and the upheavings. They said all that because they didn't know about the jar, the jar that wouldn't burn. Fire can burn bones but it can't do away with stone. The jar was with her. It would be the same as finding her bones."

Teff Fallon takes a few steps toward the creek-bed road and stops. He turns around again to look at the ruins. "I wish a storm would come and blow away every black piece lying there, every speck of ashes. People wouldn't stop here any more to search, wouldn't keep asking me questions. I'd have peace," he says to himself.

Again he starts for the creek-bed road, for the lazy waters. At the water's edge he hears faintly from up the creek-bed road, the splashing of mules, the contact of their iron shoes on the rocks, the crack of the mail-boy's blacksnake whip. And as he withdraws once more into the deep laurel he tells himself that one more morning the mail-wagon will stop at the ruins and its human load step out to look at the ashes of his old cabin.

The mail-boy stops his team not at the ruins but at Teff's new cabin. Teff can hear him calling, and is puzzled as he makes his way around the edge of the beeches. Teff wonders why the mail-boy's calling him; whether he, Teff, has some freight coming from the settlement, or whether maybe a new catalogue's come for him from the big mail-order house up North.

When Teff comes around his new cabin he meets the mail-boy at the stoop. He sees the passengers in the mail-wagon looking up at him and whispering among themselves. Two hill women, a child, and a gaunt patriarch stroking his beard and peering up from under a wide-brimmed hat. The two mules stand in the waters of Meddlesome with hanging heads, dreaming strange beast dreams.

The mail-boy, forty-year-old whiskered hillman, pulls at his chin and throws glances

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into the cabin. He throws out the lash of his blacksnake whip and flicks off the tips of the laurel scrub near the door.

"You-un got likker?" he says. "This-un fotched a belly-ache from Pennyrile."

Teff nods and leads the way into his cabin, thinking that there's more than a belly-ache behind the disturbance he sees in the mail-boy's eyes, more than a pain under his belt. While Teff finds the jug the mail-boy pulls at his chin and looks around. When he drinks from the jug he looks at Teff over it. Teff sees the white-corn liquor ride to the mail-boy's head in his blood, sees his eyes change expression, sees the disturbance melt away and an unfathomable look creep into them.

Setting down the jug the mail-boy sits in a hickory-bark chair and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. Teff looks out the door and sees the two hill women and the child staring down the creek-bed road. The old hillman is whittling. The mules dream on. Patient hill folks, clutched by the apathy of the hot hinterland afternoon. Unconcerned with time. The sun moves. Dog days have come again. Time is creeping by on padded feet; time, a caravan of minutes, passing.

"Air Preacher Jett funeral-preached on yore woman?" says the mail-boy at last, staring over Teff's head at the wall covered with newspapers.

"Haint," says Teff.

"You-un laid her bones down yit?"

Teff scratches his chin then pulls out his mountain clay pipe, fills and lights it. He takes his jack-knife from his pocket, picks up a splinter on the floor and shaves it while he thinks. Shall he say he found her bones and buried them? Shall he tell the mail-boy who is the purveyor of news along Meddlesome that he knows she's dead because he laid some of her away on the mountain top. When he knows she didn't perish how's he going to say straight out that he laid her away? What's behind the mail-boy's visit this morning? What does the oracle of Meddlesome know? Why do the mail-boy's eyes seem to be hanging on an answer? Teff's mind gropes for words, for words which might mean nothing and yet mean a lot.

"She-un warn't a fire-scorpion, I reckon," says Teff. "'At fire tee-totally consumed everything but stone."

"Tee-totally consumed," says the mail-boy.

The mail-boy scratches his head and rises. He stoops for the jug and lifts it to his lips again. Takes a big drink and returns the jug to the floor. Wiping his mouth with the back of his hand he stares at Teff for half a minute. "Tee-totally consumed! Reckon this-un war likkered-up!"

Teff frowns. The cryptic talk of the mail-boy makes the Meddlesome Creek hillman impatient. He knocks his clay pipe loudly on the floor and says: "What air the why-for you-un don' slam out yore mind?"

Throwing a glance out the doorway at the passengers still gripped by apathy the mail-boy takes another drink from the jug. "You-un got profoundest reason why yore woman air daid an' gone?"

"Wal," says Teff, "this-un haint a-seein' she-un 'roun' hyar. What air the why-for?"

"Reckon hit war she-un's hant I seed."

"Whar you-un see hant?" says Teff.

"Yander," the mail-boy says in a whisper and points down Meddlesome. "Yander across big mountain, afore yuh git ter Anathoth City. Las' evenin' when shadders came yore woman's hant crossed ol' mountain road. Scairt this-un's mule-critters when she come with shadders. Hant come sudden-quick 'cross road on big mountain when this-un war fotchin' mail alone ter Anathoth City."

The mail-boy runs his tongue over dry lips. The corn liquor makes grimaces on his face. He takes a step toward the door, peers out. "I haint a-crossin' 'at mountain ag'in when shadders come, I'm a-tellin' yer."

"Wal," says Teff, "hain't been ary hant a-walkin' 'bout hyar."

"Reckon this-un got ter go. I got me up a lot o' mail fer steam-train at Anathoth City."

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The mail-boy stalks out shaking his head. The passengers turn their faces upon him apathetically as he descends the short slope and climbs on the mail-wagon. The black-snake whip cracks. The dreamy mules step out, the wheels of the wagon grind on the small boulders.

Teff, standing in the doorway of his cabin, hears the mail-boy shout his "whoa" to his mules, hears a low buzz of voices. Rising above the other voices the mail-boy's comes. "Tee-totally consumed".

Sounds now tell Teff that the mail-boy and the passengers have left the wagon to look over the ruins. He hears the mail-boy's voice rise now and then, mountain voices sift through the laurel. Pretty soon the black-snake whip cracks again. The mules renew their splashing in the creek-bed road. The wagon wheels grind.

When the sounds die away Teff steps back into his cabin. He gazes at his hounds for a minute, the two potlickers and the half-breed Walker dog that lie stretched out on the stanchion floor. Then he turns abruptly and goes out the cabin, closing the door on the dogs. As he goes down the slope he hears their whines, their scratching, the blasts of their breath under the door.

Crossing the creek-bed road he enters a trail mouth. The trail meanders up the ridge opposite his cabin. Through tight beech woods where the wild hogs grunt and lay their snouts close to the earth to blast and root for nuts, and through patches of tough, spreading laurel, Teff makes his way upward. With his hands deep in the pockets of his jean pants his body settles into the long springy stride of the hillman. Strong legs and wind and a determined mind bring him to the top of the ridge quickly. He takes a look at the sun while the high breezes flap the brim of his hat, his calico shirt and his loose jean pants. Under the wind-whipped pines he stands immovable for several minutes, only his eyes moving, his eyes laying out a line in his mind, a line of travel that will miss the cabins of the Taneys, the Meadowes, the Ferrises, the Valentines, the Jetts, the Shakespeares. His neighbors scattered through the coves and hills musn't see him heading for the big city on the railroad. If they see him going they would be on the lookout for him to come back and he doesn't know if he'll come back and if he comes back he doesn't know how he'll come. And if he passes their cabins, if he travels by trail and meets them, they'll ask him again about the bones.

So he ignores the trail leading down the steep slope and going down the rim of the ridge a hundred yards lets himself down a gully, a deep gash in the ridge-side, made by heavy mountain storms. He follows the gully half-way down the slope and leaves it abruptly for the forest to escape the browned cabin of the Meadowes. He squeezes between saplings and goes under the spreading cucumber trees when he reaches the waters of the branch. Looking up and down the ravine first he wades the shallow waters to the other side and again enters a woods. He climbs the almost perpendicular hill diagonally. Sometimes he swerves from the line laid out in his mind to escape cabins, then makes up for it by swinging back. Knowing his hills as intimately as the crows know them, knowing the lay of every cabin in his district, every trail, every cove and branch, he passes over the hills unobserved. Pausing on each hilltop he stops for only half a minute, fixes another one in his mind as an objective and makes for it as the crow flies.

It's twenty miles from his Meddlesome Creek cabin to Anathoth, the railroad town; eighteen to the big mountain. And it's the big mountain his eyes search for as he reaches the summits of the hills. His long-seeing mountain eyes can't pierce the blue haze until, hours later, he reaches the top of a bald. Faintly, toward the north now he sees the dim line of the mountain, sees beyond it the smoke from the town. He's on the edge of familiar land. Where he stands is the near-

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est he's been to the city of sweating bodies, black men who never see the light from day to day, women who strut on the board walks wearing the scarlet marks of their sins. The city of grinding lowland music, music that maddened his, Teff's, pappy, who made a thin sweet music on his mountain dulcimer.

Ten years ago Teff stood on this same bald, bound for Anathoth to verify his pappy's tales, yet here he had stopped and turned back. Afraid to venture further. Not afraid exactly either, but liking for the adventure had suddenly cooled. Tradition had asserted itself; he had taken his pappy's word for things, had taken his pappy's warnings to heart.

But now as he stands on the same spot his resolution grows. Finally he lets himself down the other side of the bald hill. At its base where Duckhead Creek cuts a valley wider than those traversed by his own Meddlesome, he crosses the waters on small boulders thrown there by hillmen. Ahead of him now are meadows and a road winding in and out along the creek bank. He follows it until he comes to a trail mouth and enters it. The climb again is steep but half-way up the hill he leaves the perpendicular woods suddenly and comes out upon a clearing. Only stumps dot the hillside now. White-oak timber gone. Fine big trees hacked down for the work in the mines. He hears some woodcutters swinging their axes and steals away from their sounds, leaves the clearing for the tight second growth and cautiously and silently reaches the summit of another hill.

The big mountain looms up now. One more valley to drop down to and cross. He stands for a minute inspecting the mountain from end to end. Down the branch he can see where traffic leaves the creek-bed road, where men and mules leave the waters and take a short cut to the railroad town: the route of the daily mail, the road where the mail-boy said he saw his, Teff's, woman's hant.

Through the thickest part of the timber he makes his way down the slope to Duckhead creek and the valley. The sun going toward the horizon leaves a half-darkness in the perpendicular forest. The laurel and rhododendron pockets begin to draw the shadows unto themselves. Suddenly he crosses a trail and as if they sprang out of the earth the faces of two men stare at him from over a laurel patch. Blackened faces from the mines. Bodies sitting down on a log in the laurel patch, resting after the long climb of the big mountain. The torches fastened to their heads point at Teff as with an indifferent look he disappears from their view.

When he stands by the waters of Duckhead and looks up the slope of the big mountain a certain strangeness grips him. Here and there he sees feathers of smoke rising. Each feather of smoke places a miner's cabin. He hears in the distance a whistle, steam-train whistle in Anathoth, and the sound of it seems to place all the responsibility for the evil creeping into the hills. Inch by inch the foreigners are invading the hills, fetching their evils, fetching the reviling habits of the lowlands. He feels a curse on the hills. The soulless music, the poisoned liquor introduced by aliens, the gaudy store-clothes, the painted women—all make a picture in his mind that heats his blood. A scarlet berry dropped by a bird on the bank of Duckhead in front of him seems to expand, seems to take on an unholy glow, like the cheeks and the lips of his woman, like the little jar she held in her hand, which reflected its glow on her breast.

Teff's thoughts lead back again to the Fourth of July picnic. For the second time today his mind's eye sees Goliath O'Gowd twirling his chain, feeling of his smooth-shaved chin, and whispering words to his woman, strutting in his store-clothes. Resolutions born 'way down in Teff Fallon ride to his head in his blood. He steps abruptly into the waters of Duckhead and wades to

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the other side. Before he disappears into the fringe of laurel and greenbrier on the other side he turns his head to look back. He sees the bird dip down to regain its scarlet berry, fly across the water and up the slope of the big mountain. Strangely he follows the line of flight as he climbs, a scarlet glow before his eyes.

He comes abruptly to the big mountain road and backs up quickly into the laurel, squats and peers over it. So that he won't be seen by those who may pass on the road he sits down and looks through the spaces between the tight bushes. Patient like the hills, immovable like them, a woodsman born, down through generations direct from pioneers that followed Dan Boone over the Wilderness trail, Teff Fallon whose ancestors beat the warring Shawnees at their own game 'way back in time, now within earshot of the whistles of civilization, yet possessed of an instinct and resting on it.

The silence on the big mountain doesn't seem in keeping with the feathers of smoke rising here and there and the countless marks of mules and wagons on the road, rough mountain road dotted also with the jagged edges of submerged boulders and the roots of ancient trees bared and skinned by grinding dry-land sleds. The mountain's squeezed of sound but suddenly as if in mockery, as if the mountain's been holding a bedlam in reserve, its sounds break forth. Teff hears loud laughter across the road, higher up on the mountain, and soon sees three girls come out of the woods and dance their way down it, their faces and lips shot with scarlet, the white of their limbs glinting under short skirts, their hair cut close to their heads, their lowland voices raucous to his ears. Points and arches of scarlet linger before his eyes.

From down the road comes the hoarse laughter of men. In a minute a mule trots by carrying two men with blackened faces, their dinner pails clanking, their voices rising to throw jests back to the girls dancing down the mountain road. A dry-land sled comes from the other way drawn by two mules. A Duckhead hillman dreamily driving to the railroad town with his sacks of corn.

The western sky fades. The faint light remaining seems to be seized and held by the road while the thickets draw the shadows, while pockets of laurel and greenbrier draw the first shadows unto themselves.

Teff Fallon seizes the next moment of silence for his use and cautiously crosses the road to the woods on the other side. He avoids the cabin which a few minutes ago coughed up the painted girls and in which now a flickering light appears. He ascends the mountain almost to its rim which is outlined sharply against the sky and once more sits down in the laurel. Pretty soon he sees a light appear. Other lights come. The women of the miners getting victuals. Lights blink like eyes in the habitations below him. Dogs begin to bark here and there on the big mountain; their suspicions born of the dusk. Dogs, suspecting each shadow, a fugue in the night.

"I wonder which cabin she's in," Teff says to himself, "which cabin along this big mountain!"

For a moment he's gripped by a sort of helplessness; then, the night seeming to arrive in full habit so that his hand on his knee is invisible, he rises. He lets himself down the slope, senses and instinct alive. He moves through the blackness with the genius of woodcraft of Dan Boone's day. Feeling each step before he puts his weight on his feet, instinct bared, eyes and ears tuned to the forces of his own Meddlesome Creek wilderness, Teff Fallon works his way through the tough laurel and between saplings to a light. A single window frames a scene. A man, a woman and two children eating their victuals.

He passes on to another light, directs his steps to another blinking, yellow eye. Gets close enough to the window to see a woman

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nursing her young one as she eats with her free hand, her man eating voraciously.

As he makes his way from light to light now he sees windows framing scenes of folks over victuals. Supper time on the big mountain. He hears music ground out from some of the cabins, hears syncopation. Sees faces of girls painted a lurid scarlet. In one cabin he sees them fling their white limbs to a raucous tune while a baby screams, a man lies on a cot-bed and a woman washes dishes in a tub.

Up and down, zigzagging his way on the mountain from light to light, he stands at last on the brink of a shallow cove. Looking down he sees through the foliage a light, not the sharper light of a mail-order-house lamp, not a flame sputtering and spitting as in the other cabins, but a pale square. The reflection is thrown distortedly on the twining, twisting undergrowth crowding the cabin beneath him. A window that frames no scene, curtained with heavy paper.

"They were afraid I'd hunt for them," Teff Fallon says to himself as he stands immovable on the rim of the cove peering down. "Only they on this big mountain have reason to hide."

Cautiously he moves around the rim of the cove, the edge of the bowl in which the darkened cabin lies like a sediment. His feet testing every foot of ground. When they feel at last the stiff stems of laurel he lowers himself down the sides of the cove by hanging to this tough, strong undergrowth. When the ground feels level to his feet he straightens up and stands, silent and invisible. He closes his eyes to adjust them to the pall of night that covers the cove. When he opens them they see a point of light, and feeling each step he makes for it.

The hum of voices comes to him, drifts around the cove; a vibration that sets up a queer fever in Teff Fallon's head. He folds his fingers tightly in his hand, stiffens his body in a brief spasm of taut muscles.

Stepping ahead now, and stooping, he feels the wall of the darkened side of the cabin. His hands step along the wall while the voices grow louder. With his face near the point of light, the chink, he hesitates. In there is the great disillusionment. In there is the wrong in two persons. In there is the revelation. His blood climbs swiftly to his head, floating all manner of dark thoughts to his mind. His eye, adamant, lustful, covers the chink, sees his woman leaning against the foot of the iron mail-order-house bed. Her face glowing with scarlet but her eyes dark and fearful. Teff's eye sees the little jar in her hand, an unholy ember from regions where all is vanity and lust. The dark and fearful eyes of his woman fly here and there about the room.

Goliath comes into the vision of Teff, Goliath coming from a corner of the cabin and staring at the woman who now trembles, whose shaking rattles the brass knobs on the bed. Goliath, putting on his store-clothes, pauses to stare at her.

"Air you-un cold?" he says.

"I air freezin' cold. Cold inside. Cold way down. Afeared an' cold."

Hurrying with his dressing, lacing his low-cut shoes and then slipping on his striped store shirt, Goliath goes to the mirror on the wall and brushes his hair, feels of his chin, puts on a ready-made, ready-tied, store cravat.

The knobs on the bed rattle.

Goliath steps across the cabin again. Faces her. "Haint ary use o' gittin' scairt. He-un reckons yore daid. 'Cabin war tee-totally consumed,' says mail-boy. You-un did a good job."

Teff sees his woman's hands go to her face, cover her face. Her hands muffle the words of her mouth. Her whisper's cold and dry, her whisper about a dream. Something about a vision in her sleep.

"Sssssh. Haint nothin' in dreams," says Goliath glancing quickly at the door and the covered window and fumbling with his fingers for the buttons on his store coat.

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"Las' night I had a dream," she says withdrawing her hands from her face and looking fearfully at him. "He-un came. I seed him at the seat o' judgment. I seed the Baptists a-comin' with stones. I seed fire. Meddlesome war black water and carried my body on to the big pit. I heerd he-un a-laughin'. I seed you-un a-danglin' in the steam 'at rose from the pit."

Teff Fallon watches the hand of Goliath creep up the wall to the peg and takes his hat, sees his face pale and his throat swallow its lumps steadily. The Meddlesome Creek hillman sees his woman's mouth open and her body leap to the door as Goliath feels for the latch.

"Whar you-un a-goin'?" she says. "I air a-feared kase he-un air a-comin'."

"Sssssh. Thar haint nothin' ter a dream. I got me up some business at Anathoth City. I air a-goin' ter fotch you-un a purty. Thar's a tafferter dress in Anathoth like the sky at evenin'. Thar's a tafferter 'at rustles way off. Hit haint fitten you-un kiver yore body with calico. In the winder at the gen'al store thar's a tafferter 'at makes gals walk over mountains ter see, a tafferter rig 'at makes eyes pop outten heads. Tafferter dress 'at's the color o' the sky at evenin'. 'At's the business I got me up at Anathoth City."

"I hain't a-keerin' fer purties. He-un air a-comin' an' I air afeared."

The click of the latch, sounding sharply on the quiet night, jerks Teff Fallon's eyes away from the chink and turns them against the thick blackness. He moves, feeling his way, as through black waters, his hands stepping along the wall, past the pale square to the door. He sees the thin lines of light widen and narrow as the door shivers. The whispers of his woman seep through; the words of her mouth fill Teff Fallon's ears.

"Yore yaller, a-wantin' ter leave me ter he-un. Yore yaller, effen yer go an' let he-un come an' sit in judgment. You-un caint go an' leave me ter judgment from he-un; leave me ter pay he-un."

Stooping behind a fringe of laurel near the trail that ends at the door of the cabin of Goliath, Teff Fallon watches. He sees the lines of yellow light widen and narrow as the struggle goes on within, his woman striving to prevent Goliath from running away, Goliath trying to pull open the door. Sometimes the door shivers, sometimes the voice of his woman reaches Teff's ears, her voice saying that the mountain miner can't go and leave her to meet doom alone. Sometimes an "ugh" comes from Goliath, sometimes an oath.

Suddenly Teff sees the door jerked open. The trail is lighted up for twenty feet. He sees his woman hurled back against the iron mail-order-house bed, sees Goliath step out the door on to the trail, adjusting his store-clothes.

Rising quickly and throwing a leg over the tight laurel Teff stands in the trail, stopping Goliath, who takes a step backward, hooks his thumbs in his pink galluses. Brought to bay he stands immovable; only his eyes shift, glance covetously at the black cores of the shadows thrown by the beech and cucumber trees, then he watches Teff who, hands in the pockets of his jean pants, takes a short step forward, bends his body into a sort of crouch, and stands again immovable.

The corners of Teff's eyes are flicked by the figure of the woman in the doorway who clutches the door frame and looks out. Her mouth open, her body frozen. The lone spectator of what's to come. The meagre audience of a judgment. Somebody's woman!

Maybe Goliath's heard the legend of the great-grandpappy of Teff Fallon and the big black bears of the Cumberland country, maybe he's heard the old song, old ballad of the pioneer of Boone's day who bare-handed bested the bears when he saw them lopping the beech-nuts before they ripened, maybe Goliath's heard of the tactics of war practised by the Fallons way back in time, maybe he knows, or has heard of the unblemished blood-line that reaches back, way back in

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time to Elizabethan days across the sea, when the Fallons held their castles and their women against enemy hordes, when might was right and power was virtue, maybe these things cast their shadows across his mind's eye, make him glance covetously at the cores of the shadows in the laurel and edge toward them inch by inch.

And Teff Fallon must read the signs, his instinct must be alive to Goliath wanting escape, wanting oblivion because he leaps for the man in store-clothes, bowling him over into the shadows. Bone against bone, muscle against muscle. Mountain warfare. Encounter of men who fight like bears. Highlanders both, they accept torture without a whimper. Masters at gouging. Half-minutes when the silence says they've locked with each other, when only breathings come and drift heavily on the air. Then crashings in the black thickets, blows. The heavy thud of a body thrown to earth. The rustling of the laurel.

Somebody's woman in the doorway staring at the blackness, waiting for the answer that's writing itself in darkness. Somebody's woman who now reaches slowly behind the door and brings forth a rifle-gun, ancient, long-barrelled hog rifle which she holds in her hands ready for a throw to the shoulder, and which casts its long shadow on the trail, touches the edge of the black thicket with the shadow of its muzzle, while she stands staring, waiting for the answer.

The night shivers from the screech of an owl. Down in the valley of the Duckhead a hound is baying; uncertain-voiced potlicker dog betraying his breed. Drifting down the better cadence of a pure-bred Walker hound following its quarry atop the ridge, his voice lessening bit by bit, blooded dog unmindful of sore feet.

When the shadow-pocket of laurel seems to disintegrate, when a fragment of shadow stretches itself slowly out to the trail, somebody's woman throws the rifle-gun to her shoulder and trains the muzzle on the figure that unfolds slowly on the trail.

The face of Teff Fallon, splashed by the light from the cabin, stares at her while he dusts his hands, gives a hitch to his jean pants and adjusts his galluses.

She lowers the rifle-gun slowly and sets it back in its place behind the door. She steps off the stoop on to the trail at a gesture from him, wiping her hands on the bottom of her calico dress, rubbing her face until it bleaches to the color of white ash. Her fingers reach into her pocket and pull forth a little jar; fumbling fingers spill the top that falls on the trail, fumbling fingers hold a shimmering scarlet glow.

Teff sees the arm draw back and toss the jar into the core of a shadow, its flight flicking his eyes before it dies quickly like an ember.

He makes a gesture, a slow scooping motion with his arm that makes her follow him as he turns on his heels and in the long, springy stride of the hillman goes down-trail.

As they merge with the shadows they hear a faint rustle in the tight laurel back of them and turn to watch through the foliage the pale square of light in the cabin.

Pretty soon the light flashes out. The night drops a quick curtain.

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THREE POEMS

by V. Sackville-West

I

Between what different moods we alternate,
Caged, snarling beasts that our poor spirit tear:
Love, magnanimity, revenge, and hate,
Jealousy, and emasculate despair.
Hate is the tiger that with cruel paw
Clouts us until with blood we're blinded red,
And jealousy the lynx with poisoned claw
That sends the venom raging to our head.
Despair's the jackal that will each advise
With craven counsel in the weakest hour,
But love's the lion that with golden eyes
Shames the unruly pack and makes them cower.
Then, Lion, from your corner of the den,
Grant your majestic patronage to men!

II

Time was our banker once, and on our credit
Like an indulgent father let us draw.
Now he's turned sour, and our account does edit
And pounces on us with a usurer's claw.
We squandered once, where now we count th' expense:
He scores our ledger with accusing mark:

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Our minted gold is turned to shabby pence,
And every clock is Time's detective clerk.
What shall we do then? shall we meekly bear
This scrutiny, since Time's turned martinet?
Or ruthlessly our bankruptcy declare
And shamelessly dishonor every debt?
Were we indeed provoked to such a course,
Say, where would conscience be, and where remorse?

III

All night a voice, a plaintive-cadenced song,
Circling and beating round the whole night long,
Wept in his heart, "Where sleeps she even now?
(Curve of her cheek and shadow of her brow!)
On what strange pillow sinks her heavy head,
Heavy with honey-colored hair, all shed
Loose on the dented pillow round her head?
Where lie her fragile hands in sleep forgetful?
Beats that wild heart reprieved and unregretful?
Oh, have her lips forgotten how to frame
The tortured syllables that were my name?
Where sleeps she now? where sleeps she even now?
(Curve of her cheek and shadow of her brow!)
In what strange room that I shall never see
Slumbers her loveliness apart from me?"

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THE KING'S ENGLISH: NOT MURDER BUT SUICIDE

by Robert Benchley

BEING by nature and carefully acquired tastes something of an Anglophile, the following rather bitter outburst is going to hurt me more than it hurts England. In fact when, in the old days before I began filling out, I was occasionally told by strangers that I looked as if I might be English, I very often did nothing to correct the impression and even went so far as to throw in a word like "shedule" or "cement" deliberately to strengthen it. England has no better friend in the world than I am, even though I sometimes appear out of patience. That is because I am tired.

But, royalist though I am at heart, I find myself taking the old musket down from the wall and priming it for a determined stand against the redcoats who continue to assail our right to pronounce words as they are spelled. For years we colonists have submitted meekly to the charge that we speak the English language badly. We know that it is true in a way, that our voices are harsh and loud, that some of us roll our "r's" while others say "boid" and "erl", and we also know that, in the matter of vocabulary we are mere children lisping "cat", "doggie" and "O.K." exclusively. And the knowledge of these shortcomings, together with the venomous scorn with which our English friends point them out, has bred an inferiority in us which is nothing short of craven. We never think of turning on our tormentors and saying "You're not so hot yourselves!"

British nausea at American pronunciation has reached an almost active stage since the invasion of England by Hollywood-made talking-pictures. London editorial writers have taken the matter into their own hands and are now urging an embargo on American films on the charge of corrupting their youth. They see the complete degradation of the English language in fifty years if little English children are allowed to listen at their movies to the horrid sound of Americans talking. There has been some idea of limiting the sale of tickets to those of his Majesty's subjects who are safely established in the traditional English habits of speech, barring at the door all those in the formative stage. Others would have the pictorial parts of the films made in Hollywood (since England seems to be having a little trouble in making any that will sell) but the sound-tracts made in Elstree by strictly British voices, the two being synchronized to produce a picture which may be listened to by English tots without fear of contamination. The whole island is evidently on the verge of a panic such as might arise at the approach of a fleet of cholera-ridden ships up the Thames.

No one in America will deny that many of the beautiful young gentlemen and ladies of Hollywood should never have been called upon to talk, especially with sound-reproduction in the elementary stage of today. Neither will anyone deny that a large number

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of American actresses and actors who go to London in the spoken drama might well offend the sensitive British ear. They have offended even the cauliflower ear of New York.

But is England entirely without sin in the matter of language distortion? Might New York never justifiably be distressed by the sounds made by the countless English casts which come over here to earn twice what they could earn at home? Is the frequent confusion in the minds of American audiences as to just what the English actors are saying on the stage due to the fact that our auditory faculties are not attuned to pure English or to the fact that the English actors are not pronouncing the words properly as they are spelled? If spelling means anything at all in the pronunciation of a word, then the English are at fault. If it doesn't, then they are at fault anyway.

Of course, there can be no argument (and let us have this understood at the start, please) over the comparative mellifluousness of English and American speech. Even the most incompetent English actor, coming on the stage briefly to announce the presence below of Lord and Lady Ditherege, gives forth a sound so soft and dulcet as almost to be a bar of music. But sometimes that is all there is. The words are lost in the graceful sweep of the notes. I have heard entire scenes played by English actors (especially juveniles) in which absolutely nothing was distinguishable except a series of musical notes ranging in cadenzas from B to G sharp and back to B again. It is all very pretty, but is it the English language?

This slurring of words into a refined cadence until they cease to be words at all is due partly to the Englishman's disinclination to move his lips. Evidently the lips and teeth are held stationary for the most part, open just wide enough to let in air for breathing (many Englishmen must breathe through their mouths, otherwise they would not breathe at all) with an occasional sharp pursing of the lips on a syllable which does *not* call for pursing the lips. This lethargic attitude toward articulation makes more or less of a fool out of a word which is dependent on pronunciation for its success. It makes a rather agreeable sound of it, but practically eliminates it as an agent for expressing thought.

I am not dealing now with cockney or other perversions of the British manner of speaking, although Englishmen are not so fair as to remember that much of the speech which they call "American" on the stage and in pictures is deliberately vulgarized and harshened by the American actors themselves to imitate gangsters, newspaper reporters, and others of the non-classical group. I am speaking of the more "refayned" type of English actor, and even of the ordinary well-educated Englishman whom one meets in London and on the Riviera. They distort good old Anglo-Saxon words into mere blobs of sound, eliminating letters and syllables at will. And what they do to *French* words must not be mentioned here because that is not strictly within the range of this thesis. Neither is it important.

But it is safe to predict that a comparative tabulation of words in common use in England and America, analyzed phonetically as pronounced in each country, would give America a startling lead over the mother-country in accuracy. Saying them through the nose, as many Americans do, may not be so pleasant as saying them through the large palate, as many Englishmen do, but the words themselves get a better break and, at least, the integrity of the sentence is preserved.

The time is about ripe for someone to write a skit for an American revue, lasting perhaps three minutes, in which are reproduced the sounds made by a group of English juveniles such as come over here every year in plays of post-war younger-generationism, bounding on and off the stage carrying tennis racquets and giving off exuberance to the point of combustion. If I were

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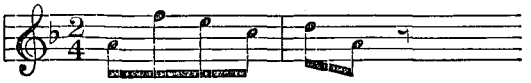
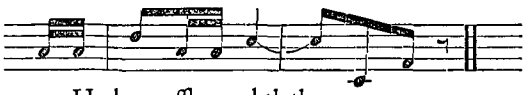
writing such a sketch I would open the scene with two or three young gentlemen and ladies lying about on window-seats and porch chairs in careless fashion, with the conversation running something like this:

Basil:

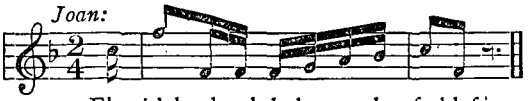


Wotjuthinkofrehddie?



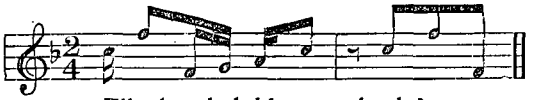
Hesbeanofflyapsehtletly

Joan:



Eheaidehntkneh-hehesentehnyfethleft

At this point Reggie would come bursting into the room, with his shirt open at the neck, fresh from badminton and would call, swinging his body lithely from the hips:



Elleuhvrybohddyweresahncle?

Things would go on like this for a minute or two with absolutely no word being spoken, just a series of British sounds with a great deal of bounding about and quick darting movements of the heads and arms. The young men would stand with feet wide apart and hands jammed down into the side pockets of their coats, while the young ladies would stand with their feet not quite so far apart and their hands jammed down into the pockets of their sweaters. It would all have to be played very fast and loosely and might end with their all putting their heads together and doing the thing in harmony, still with no words. Or a canary, which had been hanging in a cage throughout the act, might join in with them until it fell dead from exhaustion. Or almost anything might happen, provided no sense was given to the lines.

A short time ago I heard *Major Barbara* done by an English company. The young man who played Cusins was a particularly vicious example of the songster-actor so prevalent on the English stage. Although I took no notes and am not very good at carrying a tune, I should say that one of his speeches ran something like this: (The key was C sharp and the range was from B to G sharp in an almost continuous cadenza):

"Eetsnottth'sao ehvmeh seuhl thett trehbles meh; Eh hev seuhld et teuh efften teh care abeht thett. Eh hev seuhld et fereh preuhfessorshep. Eh hev seuhld et tescep beinempressoned feh refusin t'peh texes fer hengmen's reuhps end ehnjust wehrs end things thet ehabheuh. Wot es ehl humen cehnduct beht th'daioy end heuhrly sao of ehur seuhls f'trehfles? Wot ehem neuh seoinet feh is neither meneh ehr pesition nehr kemfet, bet freelity and fpeuher."

Is that any kind of English for our children to hear? If, and when, England makes talking-pictures which are good enough to be brought to this country, are we to sit by and let minors absorb this sort of distortion of our mother-tongue and perhaps grow up to speak it themselves? We pay good money to have them taught to say "don't" and "donkey". Are they to be led by outlanders into saying "dehn't" and "dehnkey"? We have been brought up to believe that dropping the final "g" is the mark of a vulgarian. Are our children to hear "nice people" from England saying "runnin'" and "singin'"? No, a theuhsend tehms Neuh!

The fact is that neither Americans nor English have anything to boast of in the matter of pronunciations of their common tongue. There are a few people in each country who have got the hang of it, but for the most part a pretty bad job has been made of the whole thing. Probably the best English is spoken by foreigners who have taken the pains to learn it correctly.

I would never have brought this matter up had it not been for the attitude of the Eng-

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lish press toward American talking-pictures. They may legitimately object to the timbre of our voices but, for the rest, they are just as bad as we are and perhaps a little worse. Yet we, being cowed by centuries of contumely, will sit attentively through act after act of English dialogue from which the vowels have been completely omitted, and if we do not quite get the drift of what is being said, give it up apologetically under the impression that it is our own fault. When English audiences do not understand, they boo. We have had, on occasion, courage enough to complain about not being able to understand Irish or Scotch dialect, but there is something about English dialect (for it is a dialect, just as much as Irish or Scotch) which has us completely whipped. Perhaps it is because so many English actors wear morning-coats.

Of course, the English actors who really speak English are just as clear in their enunciation as American actors who really speak English. We have no trouble in catching what Sir Guy Standing is saying, and Fred Kerr always manages to make himself understood. I doubt if Arthur Byron would ever bring down a great degree of scorn from the English press and Walter Hampden ought to be able to get certain syllables across to a London audience which would not offend. As a matter of fact, many of our most finished actors in this country are Englishmen who have become so contaminated by American associations that they now speak like human beings. It is, for the most part, in the fresh crop of young British actors and actresses, all ebullient and bouncing, that the strange noises occur which make theatre-going so difficult here.

The *Sunday Times* of London recently went broadminded enough to say that there should be no such thing as an "English accent". This, of course, is so true as really to need no stating, but it comes as something of a shock, even to Americans. I am not sure that it isn't slightly heretical. And I am not sure that we should like it if the English accent were completely obliterated, it is so pretty. All that we ask is some degree of enunciation, using the values given the words by their spelling, and perhaps a little less warbling.

For, in spite of this seeming petulance at the Mother Tongue as Mother speaks it, I personally have a secret love for it and could listen all night to Englishmen talking. I only wish that I could do it as they do.

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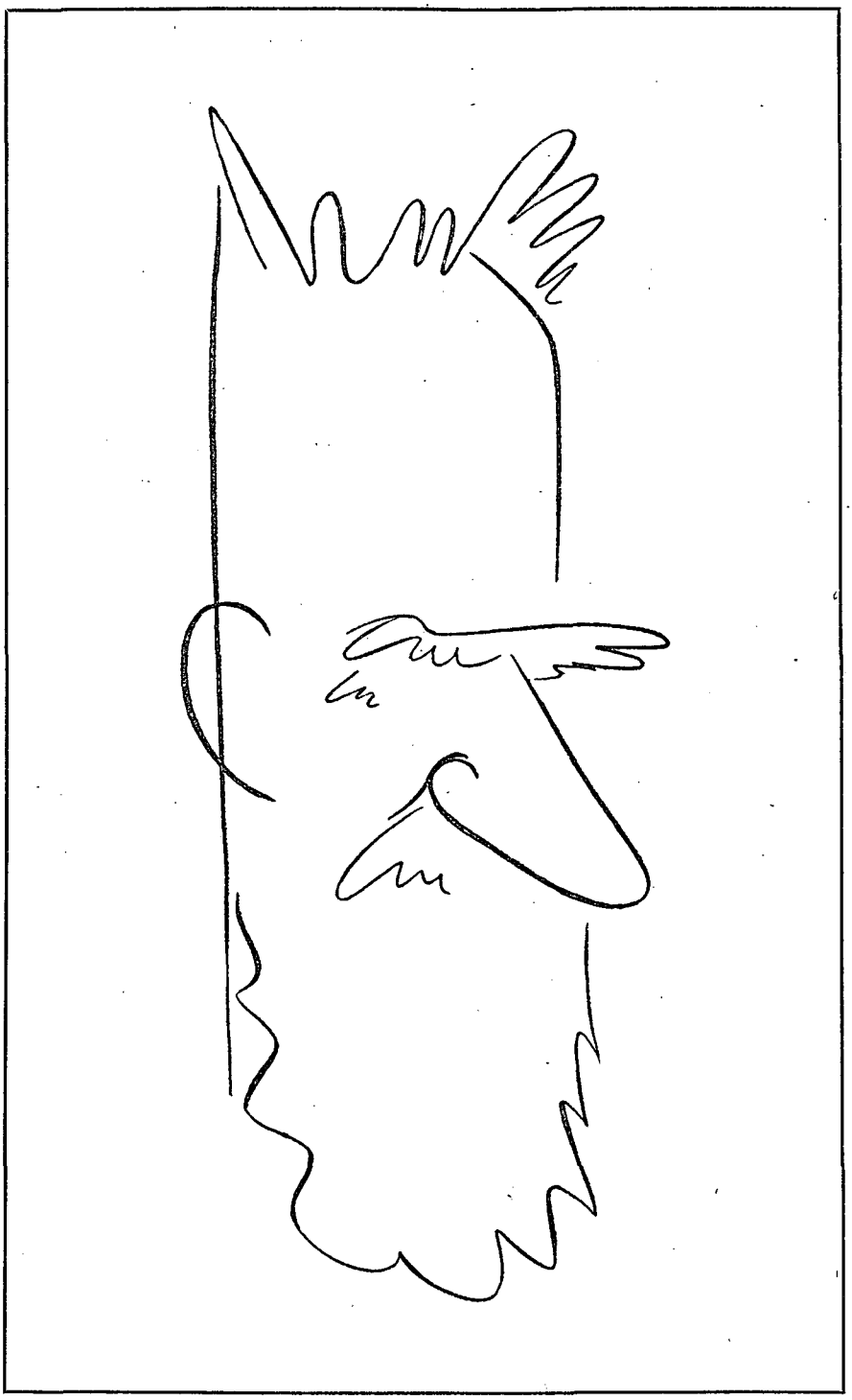

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Caricature by Eva Herrmann

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ROADSIDE MEETINGS OF A LITERARY NOMAD

III. EARLY STORIES—MEETINGS WITH WALT WHITMAN—SIDNEY LANIER

by Hamlin Garland

DESPITE all my efforts at teaching and writing and the endorsement of considerate friends, I found myself after three years still boarding with Dr. Cross in an attic room, still filled with serious aspirations, and possessing only the plainest and simplest clothing. For my housing I paid with regularity and I permitted myself now and again a gallery seat in the theatre, but for the most part I walked wherever I could save carfare and I denied myself many needed things, for I had in mind a visit to my old home in Iowa and to my father and mother in Dakota. For this purpose I had in June exactly one hundred dollars. As these were the saving of three years, I cannot claim to have been a startling literary success. I was at home in Boston. I considered it the most distinguished city of America. I was content to be there and felt a growing, slowly growing, confidence in my ability to make a living there. I had no extravagant concept of my future. In fact I would have been on the rocks several times but for my good friends, Brown and Cross.

In buying my ticket at special summer rates, I planned to stop in Chicago and see Joseph Kirkland, whose Illinois novel had interested me. With no money to expend on a berth in a sleeping car, I dozed through the night in company with the men and women of my financial status, snatching a hasty breakfast at one of the ten-minute station stops; and when I reached Chicago I was by no interpretation a triumphant man of letters as I presented myself at Kirkland's door on Rush Street.

Kirkland was a small man, alert and humorous, with fine black eyes, and thick dark eyebrows. He was a lawyer of prominence and his home, a four-story house on the north side of the Chicago River, was vastly impressive to me. He received me in his basement study with cordial interest, and after thanking me for my review of his *Zury* began to quiz me. "What are you doing out here?"

I told him anything he wanted to know and some things that bored him, no doubt, and then I turned inquisitor. "How did you come to write *Zury*?"

He explained that he had lived almost all his life in Illinois, part of the time in a small town down the state. "I am the son of a pioneer woman, Caroline Kirkland," he said, "and all the characters in *Zury* have their prototypes in my acquaintance. It is as true as I could make it. Many of the incidents are literally exact."

He then told me that he was writing a sequel to the book, to be called *The McVeys,* and showed me the manuscript—a huge pile of small sheets covered with his fine bold script. He had read one or two of my articles on Western farm life—"they are good as far as they go", he said, "but you should move on into fiction".

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"Stories are out of my line," I declared. "I can write description but I cannot write dialogue."

"Nonsense!" he replied with humorous lifting of his handsome eyebrows. "You're lazy, that's all. It's easier to tell about people than it is to dramatize them, but you must come to it."

That remark stuck in my mind. All the way across Iowa I pondered the problem. "Can I move on into short stories? Can I put the life of Wisconsin and Iowa into fiction as Miss Wilkins and Sarah Orne Jewett are recording the life of New England?" I had never been accused of laziness before and it rankled.

XVII

I arrived in Osage, weary with another sleepless night in the day coach, but my mind was alert to all that was going on inside of me as well as all that was going on around me. This is made evident by some dated notes which I made in a small book. I didn't make many, I hadn't sense enough, but I observed and remembered what I saw. My point of view was that of one who has escaped from this country life and was now a pitying visitor. I found my old neighbors in a mood of depression. Things were going badly in the West. Wheat was very low in price and dairying had brought new problems and new drudgery into their lives.

My mind was in a tumult of readjustment. Three years in Boston had given me perspective on these villages and farms. There was nothing humorous about their lives to me. On the contrary, I regarded my former neighbors as victims of an unjust land system. An immense pity took possession of me. I perceived their helplessness. They were like flies in a pool of tar. By some miracle I had escaped enslavement and while I rejoiced in my own wider, happier life, I had no desire to satirize those who remained in bondage.

The brief notes which I made at the time are now valuable to me as contemporary records. "Osage, July, 1887. The dress of all the farmers seemed unkempt, miserable. Perhaps they can wear no better. George A——'s house shows rude comfort, but not a trace of beauty. Rag carpets, old gunny-sacks on the floor. George and his family were eating their Sunday dinner of bread and milk. He was in his shirt sleeves with bare feet. The table was covered with dark blue oilcloth, with vast pitchers of milk and dishes of pickles. The steel forks and the use of steel knives brought back to me disagreeable memories. The irritable women dragged their tired and ugly bodies around, unlovely, characterless, finding comfort only in the gospels."

In another note I find a still more depressing scene. "At Blank's house I came upon the ghost of a once happy girl. The dumb old man and his guinea hen of a wife. The flies, the poor food, the narrow room, the crude and ignorant husband who knew nothing but the care of his cattle—unthinking, irreligious. The white drawn face of the girl-wife. 'I do not find time to play the organ now', she said. She gazed upon me with wondering eyes while two little brats tugged at her knee. The yard was full of weeds. As I drove away I felt that I had looked upon one more tragic end of a happy girlhood."

"The lives of these farmers are hard ones. They wear filthy clothing the year round. I heard no words of affection in their homes. All is loud, coarse, but rudely wholesome. They fear to be polite. They consider it a weakness. They are all pack-horses and they never lay down their burdens. No wonder the boys are discontented and the girls marry early. No beauty, no music, no art, no joy—just a dull and hopeless round of toil. What is it all worth?"

In these lines, authentic of mood, the reader will get, as I do, a very clear notion of my state of mind as I said good-bye to these

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friends and took the train for the James River Valley in South Dakota. Nothing that I saw on my long ride west and north lightened my gloom. On the contrary, the farther I got into the sun-smit treeless plain, the deeper my tragic concept became. Of what avail such human life?

Ordway, and my father's home in the midst of a wide wheat farm, was almost equally bare of charm, but my mother's smiling face showed that her spirit was still unbroken, and when I saw my father bringing to her a handful of wild roses I was reassured. He had not lost the touch of gallant courtesy which he had brought with him from the east. "There's nothing prettier than wild roses in the wheat," he said.

XVIII

In that bleak little house I wrote my first story descriptive of the life I had known as a boy. It was only an amplification of a story told by my mother of an old neighbor who went "back to York State", but it interested me and I wrote nearly two thousand words on it one Sunday forenoon. I read it to my mother, who said, "That's good. Go on and finish it". I did. It was accepted by *Harper's Weekly* and brought me seventy-five dollars —the first substantial sum I had ever received for a manuscript. Of this sum I sent my mother fifty per cent as I had agreed to do.

Sitting on the door-step of that hot little cottage, I wrote "Color in the Wheat", a poem which was a combination of the actual waves of wheat before me and my memory of the beautiful fields on our Iowa farm:

Like liquid gold the wheat field lies,
A marvel of yellow and green,
That ripples and runs, that floats and flies,
With the subtle shadows, the change—the sheen
That plays in the golden hair of a girl.
A cloud flies there—
A ripple of amber—a flare
Of light flows after. A swirl
In the hollows like the twinkling feet
Of a fairy waltzer, the colors run
To the western sun
Through the deeps of the ripening wheat.

I hear the reapers' far-off hum
So faint and far, it seems the drone
Of bee or beetle; seems to come
From far-off, fragrant, fruity zone,
A land of plenty, where
Toward the sun as hasting there,
The colors run before the wind's feet
In the wheat.

The wild hawk swoops to his prey in the deeps;
The sunflower droops
To the lazy wave; the wind sleeps—
Then running in dazzling links and loops
A marvel of shadow and shine,
A glory of olive and amber and wine
Runs the color in the wheat.

Notwithstanding the rigid economy of my mode of travel, I was without sufficient money to pay my way back to Boston, and so I volunteered to act as boss-stacker in the harvest field, provided I should receive a boss's pay. My father agreed, and on Monday morning I returned to manual labor after three years of literary life in "the Hub of the Universe". It was a test of my physical resiliency. My muscles were soft and my hands tender. The harvesting machine was a header which cut and delivered into huge wagon boxes the heads of the wheat, and these carriers, three in number, kept me so busy on my stack that at night I was barely able to crawl home to a bath and supper, and then drop into bed.

The literary value of this did not escape me, and in a letter to Kirkland I described my horn-like hands, my chapped lips and my dusty, sweaty garments.

"Fine," he replied. "You are the first real farmer in American literature. You are the real thing. Tolstoy is a make-believe. You should make the most of your experience. Note it all down. Leave out no essential."

This reference to Tolstoy was especially potent, for we were all hearing much of his

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renunciation of his wealth. He was pictured holding a plow and at work at a shoemaker's bench, always in picturesque smock and with nobly flying gray hair. Although I was not feeling in the least like an aristocrat and my farming was painfully real, I was struck by the force of Kirkland's line, "You are the first real farmer in American literature", and in my moments of rest I composed poems and jotted down subjects for stories. Indeed I became more and more eager to get back to my attic in Jamaica Plain in order that I might begin my career as a fictionist. The value of my experience increased with each day's labor.

XIX

It was hard to leave my mother there on that hot, treeless, flowerless ridge, but it had to be. Something stronger than my pity enabled me to be both selfish and cruel in my purpose. Promising to come again next summer, I took the money I had earned by the weight of my muscles and set out for "home", as I now called Boston, stopping for a day or two in the lovely old Wisconsin valley in which I was born, a country which seemed especially suave and sheltered and secure after a month on the arid sod of Dakota.

Here too I gained material for stories. My brain was boiling with literary concepts. My ambition was fully aroused. I was resolved to put my own region into literature.

It was with a sense of relief, of satisfaction and of anticipated opportunity for work that I climbed to the attic room which Dr. Cross had allotted to me. "Stay as long as you like," he said, and with a powerful urge to put my new concept of the West into fiction, I set to work at the desk under my window, toiling hour after hour in complete absorption.

In a few weeks I had finished several short stories and a novelette and was ready to begin my bombardment of the magazines.

My plan of battle was to aim high. Gilder was the editor of The *Century* and Henry M. Alden editor of *Harper's Weekly*. To these high judges and advocates of local color in fiction, I sent some of my almost illegible manuscripts. I had no typewriter in those days—few authors made use of them and no editor of today would have read a single page of "Mrs. Ripley's Trip" or "A Spring Romance", but Gilder and Alden were most conscientious about it. They read tirelessly.

What a winter that was for me! In the intervals of my teaching, every forenoon indeed, and often at night, I wrought at my desk in the conviction that I had something to embody which no one else had thought of putting into verse or fiction. I wrote and rewrote, inspired by a study of the flexible, colloquial yet always beautiful style of Howells. I had no wish to imitate him. I knew that my expression must be my own; but the care, the judgment, and taste which were so evident in his books, held me to my purpose to do nothing slipshod.

I had acquired a belief that style should be the garment of the thought, and since my stories were of a rugged simple pioneer folk I kept my writing in that key. My mood was dark and bitter, I must admit, and much of my work during 1887 and 1888 was in that key. All of the stories which made up *Main-Travelled Roads* and *Prairie Folks* were written at this time. Not all were savage; two or three were humorous and made successful readings in the lectures which I occasionally gave to my classes.

Among my files I came across a little notebook lately which bears the date 1888, and proves that I spent a part of that summer lecturing in a New Hampshire summer school. I find this entry: "At Weirs. Such a collection of lean and hungry women. Such bare-bones of manners. Here is the American rural democracy, corresponding to the democracy of Boston Common. Here are women of no taste, no style, but of deep earnestness. They take their pleasure sadly".

Another entry is a pencilled poem preceded by the note, "Written at Mr. Howells's

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place". This was at Watertown, just beyond Belmont, the house and garden of which he celebrated later in his novelette, *The Shadow of a Dream*. Howells was away when I called, but was expected soon, and as I lay out on the grass under a tall tree I wrote my poem, which later became a message to the toiler:

Lying prone where a broad elm stands and sways,
I look with dreaming troubled gaze
To where within the far-off city's haze
Worn men are toiling in the heat.
Oh wind of the west, go greet for me
These toilers in the city's deeps.
Go teach them to be wild and free
And chainless as the eagle keeps.

Howells came soon, and as he led me through the fine old garden, beautiful in its neglect (it was a rented place) he said, "I cannot bring myself to change it". There was a hydraulic ram at the lower corner of the plot and in speaking of it he said, "We always allude to its path as 'the walk along the ramparts' ".

This joke remains with me while most of what we talked about is utterly gone. His talk was full of deliciously humorous quips, but he seldom made a pun.

Another of my records is headed "The Isle of Shoals"—

Bare scarp of rock
Set like a share to plow the sea.
Low, lava-like, naked
With crevices lit by gleam of splendid shells,
And sheen of foam on glowing moss.
No tree against the cloudless sky,
No note of bird or farm-yard brute.
Only the sun-bright seas' wild singing.
As white as snow the blue deeps ramp
Across the granite lomes of rock.
Lost in mist the far horizon-line
Blends with the gray-blue of the sky.
I dream and shudder as I dream
Of how the mighty thunder of the seas
Breaks in winter on these savage cliffs
Where now the fisher nods and sways
In warm clear light! . . .

Another entry shows the remorseless mood which dominated me even in New England. I do not recall where it was written but the heading is "A Workingmen's Home". "This means a small bare dingy room to sleep in. It means a table spread with a dirty red cloth, with aged napkins under each plate, a table swarming with flies and bare of wholesome food—beans, sour bread, tough beef or lamb, acidulous pies—". I dimly recall this as a description of an eating-house, but I saw other and lovelier places.

"In Kittery, Maine, the huge elms, the old houses, the sun-bright seas in vistas here and there, the apple-trees, the green nooks, the quaint familiar farm-steads so still and peaceful on this Sunday. The old Pepperel Mansion over two hundred years old. How dear it all seems in contrast to the hot Dakota plain!"

My brother was with me, and it would seem that I was beginning to work on a play, the one I afterwards called *Under the Wheel* and which was my first published book—or booklet—for I find jottings of scenes, characters and situations. That I was groping towards something high and stern and true is evident by the incoherent scraps of dialogue and description. It is all so long ago!

XX

My work at Brown's school continued and prospered to the point of providing enough money to take me to Dakota again in the summer of 1889. Dr. Cross went with me on the trip and stopped with me in West Salem. He too had a desire to own Dakota land—until he saw it! It must have been a strange adventure for him. I took him to our poor home on the plain and it is well I did, for my long-suffering mother was stricken with partial paralysis and I was in sore dismay on her account, but she recovered to a point which permitted me to return to my work in Boston in October.

Everything conspired to keep me in the

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mood of a reformer. I wrote articles for the *Standard,* Henry George's New York paper, and spoke on the single tax to any club or society which would invite me. I wrote a single tax story, "Under the Lion's Paw", which my friend James A. Herne read, now and again, with great success. It is rather remarkable that I kept as clear of preaching in my stories as I did, but this was due in a large measure to Howells, who, by example and advice, had taught me to exemplify, not to argue.

Under the Wheel appeared first in the *Arena* and then was published, or printed let us say, by the Barton Press, probably from the plates of the *Arena,* and the public was directed to address Garland Brothers for extra copies, should its appeal be such that the world simply *must* possess the story after the supply of *Arena's* was exhausted. We had a few hundred copies printed and I tried hard to give them away. Today I suppose they are valuable as curiosities.

This was not the end of the theme, for I novelized it and made of it a story which I called *Jason Edwards,* in which I contrasted the tenement life of Boston with the settler's life in Boomtown, Dakota. That it was not an entirely foolish book is evident from the words of William Stead in the English *Review of Reviews,* who was friendly and critical enough to find in the July *Arena* "a remarkable feature, a modern play by Hamlin Garland, a terribly realistic story, a grim representation of the way in which human beings are ground 'under the wheel' ".

It comforts me to recover these words of approval from my records, for as I became more of the artist and less of the reformer, I grew a little shy of mentioning this work. *Jason Edwards* long ago passed out of print, and is valuable today only as a further indication of the bitter and accusing mood of that time—a time of polite socialism, single tax crusades, populism, People's Party orators, Ibsen dramas, and Tolstoyan encyclicals against greed, lust and caste.

All these revolutionary sentiments I shared in some degree. I argued for the stark truth of Ibsen's plays. I helped to banish soliliquies and asides. I argued for "impressionism" as well as a layman could, and always I preached against special privilege and the injustice of monopoly. I fear I was a very unpleasant person to meet.

XXI

One of the very first books for which I had asked at the Boston Public Library was Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.* I had heard much of this book in the West but had never set eyes upon it and even here in Boston it was "double starred" on the list and issued only to serious students of literature. Heaven knows I was serious enough; and so at the age of twenty-five, I began my acquaintance with "the poet of Democracy"—an acquaintance at once thrilling and abiding.

Of the tremendous vitality of his message I was at once aware. Formless as the book appeared, its deeply patriotic spirit, its wide sympathy with working men and women and especially its faith in the destiny of "these States" exalted me. I caught some part of the writer's faith in American manhood and the part America was to play in the world's future history.

From *Leaves of Grass* I passed to *Specimen Days,* which made me admire him even more deeply. That he profoundly influenced my thinking I freely acknowledge. I reread Toqueville in the light of *Democratic Vistas,* and perceived that the local-color novel had sociologic value in that it aided the readers of one part of our widely separated States to understand the problems of another. I began at once to say these things to my students at Brown's School and elsewhere.

I went further. I wrote to Walt (as he called himself) telling him how inspiring I found his *Specimen Days and Collect* and that I considered his prose the very best avenue of approach to his poetry:

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"Jamaica Plain, Boston, Mass.
"November 24, 1886

"Mr. Walt Whitman:

It is with profound sorrow that I read in the papers the news that you are again suffering from your old trouble. I trust it is not as serious as reported. My regard for you is so great that I am very sorry not to be able to buy more copies of your book and thus give a more substantial token of sympathy.

"I am an enthusiastic reader of your books, both volumes of which I have within reach of hand. I am everywhere in my talking and writing making your claims felt and shall continue to do so. I have demonstrated (what of course you know) that there is no veil, no impediment between your mind and your audience, when your writings are *voiced.* ("That's a point to chew on," Walt exclaimed, breaking in. "Read it again. I want to get it clear in my noodle for keeps.") The formlessness is only seeming, not real. I have never read a page of your poetry or quoted a line that has not commanded admiration. The music is there and the grandeur of thought is there if the reader reads, guided by the sense and not by the external lining or paragraphing. Even very young pupils feel the thrill of the deep rolling music though the thought may be too profound for them to grasp. In a course of lectures before the Boston School of Oratory last summer I made a test of the matter. I do not think a single pupil held out against my arguments supplemented by readings from your works. The trouble is they get at your work through the daily press or through the defenders of Longfellow or Tennyson (whom it is supposed you utterly antagonize). When it is brought to them by one who appreciates and measurably understands your methods and ideals, I do not think there is any doubt of the favorable result. I have found much opposition but it was mostly ignorant or misled.

"I am a young man of very ordinary attainments, and do not presume to do more than give you a glimpse of the temper of that public which would not do you wrong, deliberately, but who by reason of the causes hinted above, fail to get at the transcendent power of *Leaves of Grass.* If I had given you the impression that I believe in you and strive to interpret you, you will not feel that I have over-stepped the privilege of a pupil in the presence of a great teacher.

"The enclosed slip is a meagre outline of a volume which I am writing and which I hope to get out this coming spring. As the motto page of this volume I have used a paragraph from your *Collect* which is entitled "Foundation Stages, then Others". While it is not strictly essential to the book, yet I should esteem it a favor if you would consent to its use. One sentence: "In nothing is there more evolution than in the American mind". I have also used in company with it Spencer's great law of progress upon my title page. It helped to decide the title which is *The Evolution of American Thought;* an outline study of the leading phases of American literature, etc. In the latter part of the volume I have treated of the Age of Democracy and its thought taking as foundation the splendid utterances of M. Taine upon the modern age. It is in this chapter that I place your work. I quote from you quite largely both in treating of your writings and in treating the general theme of present and future democratic ideals. I hope to be able to please you with my treatment of your great work. Have you any objections to the quotations which I find it necessary to use?

"In conclusion let me say that without any bias in your favor (rather the opposite from newspapers) your poems thrilled me, reversed many of my ideas, confirmed me in others, helped to make me what I am. I am a borderman, born in Wisconsin and raised on the prairie frontier. I am a disciple of Mr. Spencer and therefore strive at comparative methods of criticism. That your poems should thus convert me is to me a revelation of their power, especially when I can convince others in the same manner.

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"And now, revered friend (for I feel you are a friend), think of me as one who radiates the principles of the modern age, and who will in his best manner (poor at best) strive to make his hearers and readers better aware of the 'Good Gray Poet' and his elemental lines.

"Your readers are increasing, and may you live to see the circle infinitely extended is my fervent hope. I do not expect a reply to this other than the signification whether I may quote you or not. I wish I might see and talk with you but that is not possible, except through your volumes.

"I am most sincerely yours

"HAMLIN GARLAND."

This letter interested him and he replied, but it was not till long after that I learned how profoundly my letter had touched him. To him I was a "Boston professor" and a highly influential convert.

So far as I knew he had only one other open advocate of his books in all Boston. This was William Sloane Kennedy, a man of letters who acted as proof-reader on the *Transcript*. Our common interest in Whitman drew us together and from him I learned that the poet was alone, broken in health and very poor. "He is confined to his room but enjoys having his friends. Go and see him if you are down that way."

XXII

This suggestion lay in my mind for two years before I found myself able to carry it out. Not till in October, 1888, did I cross the river from Philadelphia in search of the poet whose presence had made Camden known throughout the world. The citizens from whom I inquired my way to Mickle Street, directed me into a mean section of the city and when I came to the number designated I could not believe that I had been rightly informed, so dim was the door-plate and so weather-worn the doorway. The street was ugly and narrow, and the house—a two-story frame structure—was such as a day laborer might have owned, and yet the poet's name was there.

In answer to my ring, a small gray man whom I guessed to be Whitman's attendant came clumping down the stairway and received my name impassively. "Wait here," he said, "I'll see if you can come up."

While he went back up the stairs, I studied the faded paper on the walls and the worn carpet of the hall with growing astonishment. The sordid surroundings filled me with pity and dismay.

From the landing above the man called down, "Walt will see you for a few minutes". He emphasized the brevity of my stay and warned me not to weary the old man.

On entering the door on the left I found myself in a fairly large square room on the north front of the house, and in the center of it Whitman standing by his arm chair, with a broad white hat on his head, awaited me, a tall man clothed in gray with a cloud of white hair and a beard enveloping his face. Without leaving his place he extended his hand and greeted me pleasantly in a voice rather high in key, mellow and cordial, inviting me to be seated. The grip of his hand was firm and vital.

He was dressed in a loosely fitting gray robe, and his linen shirt with rolling collar unbuttoned at the throat and his cuffs were immaculate. I thought him one of the noblest figures I had ever seen. His head was magnificent in contour, and his profile clean cut as a coin.

In contrast to his personal order and comeliness, the room was an incredible mess. Beside his chair rose a most amazing mound of manuscripts, old newspapers and clippings, with many books lying open face down at the point where he had laid them aside.

The furnishings of the room were few and ugly. The bleak windows looked out upon a row of frame tenements whose angular roofs and rude chimneys formed a dreary land-

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scape. It was a melancholy place of confinement for one who had roamed America's open roads and sung its sunlit vistas. No one had prepared me for this bitter revelation of the meagre awards which *Leaves of Grass* had won for its author.

In spite of his surroundings he looked the hero of the poems, strong, self-poised with a certain delicacy of action and speech. His face which turned toward me disclosed a pleasant searching glance. His mouth was hidden in his great beard but his eyes were smiling and the lines on his brow were level. Nothing querulous showed in voice or word. His speech was nobly pure with nothing of the coarseness I had been led to expect. When he dropped into homely phrase or coined a word he did so with humorous intonation. It is because some of his interviewers failed to record the smile that so many misinterpretations of his conversation have been recorded. This use of the common speech now and again lent additional charm to all he said. He had no word of humor, however. He was grave without being low-spirited or grim, placidly serious in all that he said. He made no reference to his poverty or to his illness and nothing petulant or self-pitying came into his voice.

Once he rose in order to find some book which he wished to show me and I perceived that one side of his body was almost useless. He dragged one leg, and he used but one arm. In spite of the confusion of his books and papers he seemed to know where to find what he wanted.

The attendant had said, "a few minutes" but Walt was interested, and so I stayed on with full realization of the value of every additional moment. We talked of his English friends, of his growing acceptance there, and I confidently predicted his acceptance in America. "I can sense a change in the attitude of critics in the last two years," I assured him, and he listened with an eagerness almost pathetic. "I hope you are right," he said.

He asked me about my work in Boston and seemed keenly interested in my praise of *Specimen Days*. "I find it the best introduction to your poetry," I said. "I advise all my pupils to begin by reading it."

"That is very curious," he said, musingly. "Most of my readers neglect my prose."

I went on to say that his descriptive passages had the magic which set me in the midst of his landscape; "I feel and see it as you saw and sensed it. I even smell it".

As I talked he studied me with dim, gray-blue eyes, as if marvelling at my youth and fervor. He had laid aside his broad Quaker hat by this time and I thought the lines of his head the noblest I had ever known. His brow was like that of a serene and kindly philosopher and his sentences were well chosen and concise. He had no local peculiarity of accent or pronunciation, at least he left no singularity of speech in my memory. My impressions were all in harmony with my preconceived notions of his nobility of spirit.

"I am a good deal of a Quaker," he said as if explaining to me his peculiarities of dress. "My ancestors were Quakers and I delight to recall and to retain certain of their distinctive customs."

One of his "whims" was to suffer in silence the sting of the various false reports about him. He would not authorize his friends to go into print to defend him. He reminded me of Grant in this. "I prefer to leave all that to time," he said. "Such things clear themselves up, or at worst they deceive only the unthinking whom your explanation would not reach."

I led the talk toward things literary and being "moved by the spirit", as he smilingly confessed, he talked freely of his contemporaries and gave me full permission to quote him.

I told him that many good people considered him unduly severe on American literature in general and "certain of our poets in particular, Stedman and Gilder for example".

He became grave. "You refer to a report

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by a German writer. I do think Stedman was deceived, though many of his friends think I have the spirit to rasp him. It would have been ingratitude to have said such words even had I thought them, which I do not. I hold Stedman in high regard as a man of decided insight and culture. On personal grounds I owe him much. The traveller you mention, either wilfully or otherwise twistified"—here he smiled—"what I said, if I said anything in his presence. I am beset with all kinds of visitors who go away thinking me fair game. It is one of the evils which men of any"—he hesitated again—"notoriety must bear patiently.

"As for American literature in general, I have insisted, as all my readers know, on the need of distinctive flavor in our poetry. There is an old Scotch word, Burns uses it occasionally, which expresses exactly what I mean: the word 'race'. A wild strawberry, a wild grape has the racy quality, this distinctive tang. Our poetry lacks 'race'. Most of it might have been written in England or on the Continent. I myself like Cooper, Bryant, Emerson and Whittier because they have this distinctive American quality."

XXIII

This led me to bring up the work of George W. Cable, Joseph Kirkland, Joel Harris, Mary E. Wilkins and others of my friends who were getting, it seemed to me, just what he was demanding. "Their books are in my judgment forerunners of a powerful native literature."

After a pause he said, "It may be so, but I have not read many of them. Against some of them I have read I might bring a grave charge. They have a deplorable tendency toward the *outré*. I call their characters 'delirium tremens characters'. These writers seem not content with the normal man, they must take the exceptional, the diseased. They are not true, not American in the deeper sense at all. To illustrate, in a hunters' camp of twenty men there will always be some who are distorted, unusual, grotesque, but they are not typical of the camp. So in an army mess there are always characters more or less abnormal, men who enjoy distorting their faces and cutting up antics. And yet in all my coming and going among the camps of the Civil War, I was everywhere struck with the decorum, a word I like to use, of the common soldier, his good manners, his quiet heroism, his generosity, even his good real grammar. These are a few of the typical qualities of the American farmer and mechanic".

All this was said quietly but with deep earnestness as if working the problem out while speaking. Then turning his glance on me he spoke with decision. "I say that the novel or drama claiming to depict American life is false if it deals mainly or largely with abnormal or grotesque characters. They should be used merely as foils."

This led me to say, "In the early stages of national literature it is natural to deal with the abnormal, the exceptional because it startles, claims the attention, so it may be that the novelists you speak of may be just in the preparatory stage and that they will pass on to something higher".

He fell into profound musing, and at last said with deliberate precision as if making a concession which he had not hitherto directly stated, "I don't know but you are right. I can see that the novice would find the exceptional nearest his hand and most noticeable, and it may be that these books are preparatory to a new, indigenous fiction. The Public itself, moreover, seems to demand and enjoy such work. It may be as you argue, that the writers and the public will grow toward a higher perception. At any rate I want to utter my protest against such work and to demand that the really heroic character of the common American be depicted in novel and drama".

I forgot his age, his sickness, his drab surroundings, as I listened to his noble voice

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and lofty personal convictions. He was a grand and ageless spirit at the moment. His sublime faith in the average American did not come from a dreamer, cloistered and bookish, it was the judgment of one who knew the farmer, mechanic, cab-driver, miner, street laborer and roustabout from personal contacts.

"I guess I am aware of our political and literary fraudulencies," he said calmly, "but as things are going on in the States in our time, I am confident of results. I have no sympathy with current pessimistic notions of life, or government, or society."

This serene and buoyant optimism in the midst of old age, poverty and physical pain filled me with admiration. It was majestic. It was another proof of the simple faith of this indomitable poet who looked into the future with the unswerving gaze of an eagle. He was still of a mind to say, "I know the future will be well for all that is, is well".

Seeing that my interview was nearing an end, I said, "May I carry from you a friendly message to these young novelists?"

"You may, with this advice and plea. Tell them to go among the common men, as one of them, never looking down upon them. Tell them to study their lives and find out and celebrate their splendid primitive honesty, patience, and what I like to call their heroism. When our novelists shall do that in addition to being true to their time, their art will be worthy all praise from me or any other who is insisting on native anti-class poems, novels and plays.

"And finally I would say to the young writer, don't depict evil for its own sake. Don't let evil over-shadow your books. Make it a foil as Shakespeare did. His evil is always a foil for purity. Somewhere in your play or novel let the sunlight in." Here he raised his superb head and in a grandly suggestive gesture of his arm made his point clear. "As in some vast foundry whose wells are lost in blackness, a scuttle far up in the roof lets the sun and the blue sky in."

As I copy these words from the original manuscript of my story of him, it conveys to me the odor of the sick room and its drugs, but there was only mental health, vigor and clarity of phrase in Whitman's exhortation.

As I rose to go I assured him that the circle of his admirers was swiftly widening, and that his influence on our literature was certain to be greater year by year.

"Burroughs tells me the same thing," he said, "and I hope you are both right."

He put on his hat, rose painfully to his feet, and gave me his hand at parting. I understood the respect which this formality indicated and was proud of it.

XXIV

As I went away down the street, my heart ached with sympathy and resentment. To think of the author of *Specimen Days* and *Democratic Vistas* a prisoner in that dreary, sunless, depressing room, shut off from even a glimpse of the sky or a green leaf, was tragic. He was waiting like a fearless watchman, ready for the summons of relief.

In a letter which I wrote immediately after, I said, "It is a shame that this man who gave the best years of his life and the very blood of his heart for the Northern soldier, and who did more to relieve the horrors of our Civil War hospitals than any other man, an angel of mercy to nearly a hundred thousand sick and dying men, should now in his old age and weakness be lacking a cheerful home and the comforts of air and sunshine".

In a review of *November Boughs* I ended by saying:

"The advocates of Whitman's case have demanded too much of the public; they have not taken into account as well as he has the inertia of the average mind, whose thinking is necessarily along well-worn grooves, and can be but slowly and unwillingly turned aside. We insist now on the critics taking a new stand on the matter. Whitman is no longer a mystery; he is the serene, gentle,

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grand old man, living in Camden, who sends us what he thinks in his final volume, desiring readers and friends amidst the democracy which he loves so well, his faith not shaken by all the buffetings, unkindnesses and neglect which he has received. We should hasten to do him honor while he is with us. Praise too often builds monuments when it should buy bread; furnishes tombstones where it should warm houses. Royal praise for the hearing ear, I say, flowers of love for the throbbing sense of the living poet. I present my tribute, drop my bit of laurel into the still warm, firm hand of the victorious singer:

Serene vast head with silver cloud of hair
Lined on the purple dusk of death,
A stern medallion velvet set—
Old Norseman throned not chained upon thy chair,
Thy grasp of hand thy hearty breath
Of greeting thrills me yet
As when I faced thee there!
Loving my plain as thou thy sea,
Facing the East as thou the West,
A handful of grasses I bring to thee—
The prairie grasses I love the best;
Type of the width and wealth of the plain,
Strong of the rigor of wind and sleet,
Fragrant with sunlight and cool with rain,
I bring it and lay it low at thy feet
Here by the shore of the gray salt main!

I have faith to believe that the circle of readers who feel as I do toward Whitman is constantly growing and will continue to grow as men come to know him. May he live to enjoy the ever-increasing respect of the thinking people of his day."

My confident prophecy of wider acceptance was borne out in the dinner which his friends organized on his seventieth birthday. For some reason not clear to me now, I was not only able to attend the dinner, but was given a seat near the speakers. Richard Watson Gilder presided and just before the speaking began, old Walt, riding in a wheel-chair came grandly in, waving his hand to the guests who rose and applauded him.

It chanced that space was made for him not far from me, and I was able to watch the changing expressions of the poet's happy face, for he was happy in this evening's congratulations and praise. Not all his most loyal friends were there, but many of them were, and others had sent messages. My clearest recollection is of a delightful colloquy between Walt and Gilder. In his address Gilder spoke of the harmony of form and spirit in *Leaves of Grass,* and said that he found the form always appropriate and often beautiful.

"No, no!" interrupted Walt, incredulously, "you don't mean that?"

Gilder turned and smilingly said, "Yes, Walt, I mean just that. I find the form of your verse logical and peculiarly satisfying".

This praise for the structure of his verse was of especial value to Whitman for it came from an editor whose interests were almost entirely esthetic. Although not a great poet himself, Gilder had taste, and as he went on quoting passages from *Leaves of Grass* in which the poet's thought found almost perfect expression, Whitman smiled in pensive pleasure, rejoicing in the confirmatory applause of his auditors.

In spite of his evident enjoyment of the dinner, he grew weary and his attendants reluctantly wheeled him away, while all the guests rose and cheered his exit. Many of us realized that we would never see him again.

He lived a little longer in constant bodily pain, as Traubel has recorded, but with mind unimpaired to the last.

XXV

Another of my literary enthusiasms during these early years in Boston was Sidney Lanier, who died just before I went East. I had no meeting with him, but the impression his books made upon me was so vivid and so enduring that I felt him to be a near presence.

It chanced that I came at him through his volume of lectures on *The Science of English*

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Verse, which appealed to me as if with living speech, and I hastened to secure his poems in order that I might test his theories by his practice. His verse puzzled me at first by its complexity, but it grew in music with each rereading.

Eager for more knowledge of this singer, I read every accessible article by him or about him, every magazine note of his work, every obtainable comment, until at last I felt it my duty to let the world know (so far as I was able) the message this poet, this thinker, had given me.

Surrounded by those to whom he sang in unavailing phrase—for New England is essentially without the inborn sense of song—I reasoned then as I do now that no common soul could so come to a fellowman unheralded and unknown, and exalt him, and in a way, transform him, as Lanier had exalted and transformed me.

Although a poet of the South, Lanier's career was typical of the combat which every American artist has been forced to undergo. It was not difficult to imagine what Macon must have been in 1860, nor how little there was to nurture and sustain him after the war. It was a time of fierce sectionalism, and to a nature like Lanier's, any race or class or sectional hatred was a torment. His father was a lawyer of French Huguenot ancestry, his mother of Scottish descent, a fine mixture.

After a merely rudimentary education in what he himself called "a farcical college" the war came, robbing him outright of four years of life, fixing upon him a disease which made the few working days of his youth a piteous slow dying, and reducing his artist-life to the space of thirteen years. Yet, notwithstanding his pain, the work which he did in the space of these few years may be set against that of any Southern writer. Certainly no artist ever followed an ideal more unswervingly in the midst of so many discouragements.

In opening his volume of verse, I chanced upon "Sunrise", and was instantly and profoundly stirred by its freedom of form, its wealth of thought, its intricacy of metaphor and its glorious music, and yet the subtleties of the metaphors, the changes in the rhythm, like the infinite shimmering lights of a near-seen landscape, distracted me. To this day "Sunrise" lives with me more closely than any other nature poem.

This striving after something dimly seen and dimly felt I soon discovered arose from an overwhelming musical tendency, which made of Lanier first of all a singer, establishing the lyric quality of his writing as absolutely as it did that of Blake or Shelley. He was a musician in every moment of his life. He was too intellectual, too masterful, too original, too sane, to be affected by Poe. He belonged to the open air, the wide sky. From the very start, he united a sort of Saxon simplicity of diction with a wonderfully modern conception of verse-form. He was lyric not as Poe was lyric; rather he was symphonic. His verses had the warmth of daylight. Sadness was in them, but it was a brave sadness,

> O Hunger, Hunger, I will harness thee
> And make thee harrow all my spirit's glebe.
> Of old the blind bard Hervé sang so sweet
> He made a wolf to plow his land.

"Whatever else his poetry may not be, it is perfect song," I said to my pupils. "It has a flexible, variant, vibrant quality which is well-nigh unapproached by any American poet."

Curious as it may seem to other lovers of Lanier, I found much in common between "The Marshes of Glynn" and Whitman's "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking".

Whitman was wilder, sterner and more iconoclastic than Lanier, yet both were poets of cosmic sympathy. With singularly individual outlook on nature, each believed in uttering himself in characteristic fashion, each instinctively avoided conventional forms. I found no difficulty in loving and admiring them both. Whitman discarded verse, Lanier mastered it. Whitman said, "Rhymes are fet-

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ters". Lanier said, "We will make them bracelets of gold". Whitman said, "Ignore the old forms". Lanier said, "Let us build new from the old".

XXVI

Diverse as were their methods, I felt that each was striving for a newer, freer form, a greater and broader poetic art. Each recognized that human nature was forever changing, that old conceptions were ever giving way, and the bounds of Art forever enlarging. The old was forever dying, the new forever being born and they both taught that the song of the past could not be the song of the future. Just as surely as that the past cannot be relived, just so surely as human life proceeds from the simple to the complex, just so surely must the forms of art-expression of one age give way for others more complex, forever changing with the changing conditions of human life and the varying conceptions of the universe.

Nothing seemed so monstrously unjust to Lanier as the thought that the toilers of earth should only now and then catch through grimy windows fleeting glimpses of the wide landscapes of life. Poverty not only pinches the flesh and callouses the hands, it sears and twists and callouses the soul. It herds men and women where only the brutal in their lives can spring up. It fixes them forever in a miasmatic atmosphere of greed, of crime; and this dwarfing, this distorting of humanity it was, which moved him. He lacked the large view, perhaps, which kept Whitman serene and calm, even while suffering both poverty and disease, the view which teaches that all things make toward some good though hidden end, but at his clearest he rose above petulance and bitterness, as in the conclusion of "The Symphony"—

Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east to west,
Love! Love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ,
And double erasings,
Of chords most fit.
Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read thy weltering palimpsest.
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.
And ever Love hears the poor-folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing.
And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

To him as a master musician, "Music is Love in search of a Word", and in all that he did he labored to supply a little more heart to an age which had too much head. He was American in the largest sense.

In something like Whitman's way he uttered a passion for nature. He perceived the landscape in the cosmic way. His teaching was modern, his moral without cant. I gladly bear witness that he was an immense force in my life at this time. He taught me freedom within law. His lines flowed down the printed page like water rippling into whirls of rhyme, pleasantly, unexpectedly and so easily as to be hardly more confining than prose.

There is no need to praise such work gingerly. It is beautiful, full of meaning, and supremely musical. It is as certainly the voice of an individual soul as are the wild sweet lyrics of William Blake. Because it was so individual, it appealed to me most powerfully. It spoiled my taste for quatrains, for jingle, for jog-trot. I perceived that large forms are necessary for large concepts. Variant forms for varying themes.

No one can fully enjoy Lanier's verse who has not lain low in the grass of the plains or in the deep of a wood, abandoned to the wandering winds and the leaves till the insects forget the intruder, and sylvan life with all its multitudinous stirrings and collocations proceeds in so intimate and so friendly a way

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that the dreamer becomes a brother to the bird, a partner of the oak.

Lanier's exquisite natural sensibility seems to have been raised by his sufferings to an intensity that is well-nigh unparallelled. He was carried beyond the man who observes nature to the man who is as one with nature, vibrating in harmony with it. He did for me what Emerson theorized about. He had the cosmical view of man's relations to the material universe. Matter was to him luminous, radiant, mysterious. He found a cousin in the cloud, a brother in the man-bodied tree, a friend in the sun. He was a far cry from Thoreau and his philosophic interest in ants and toads which was revolutionary in its time and in its own way. His nature-love had nothing in common with the medieval anthropomorphism that filled the water with nixies and the woods with fays. His was rather the scientist's conception which rises from a knowledge that as forms of force all organisms are akin. Evolutionary science runs all through his songs, aiding him to sing of space of heat and light, putting him in harmony with the deepest philosophies as well as with the highest religious teaching.

It is not necessary to apologize for him, as many of our critics have done, feeling that he was too fine to be skipped. The work he did has raised him high among our men of letters, but the truth, beauty and sympathy he suggested should place him among the prophets. As he says of the ideal poet I say of him, "He wholly lived his minstrelsy".

His song was only living aloud,
His work a singing with his hand.

(*To be continued*)

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A DAY WITH FRIAR JOHN

THE SECOND OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE FRANCE OF RABELAIS

by Albert Jay Nock

Religious bodies have always done well to lay stress on pilgrimages. There is immense psychological value in them. No amount of reading, study, or picture-gazing can produce an effect on the spirit comparable to that produced by contact with reality, or the remains of reality. I have read Rabelais diligently for thirty years, probably also almost everything that has been written about him, and I have seen all kinds of representations of the scenes and historical monuments that are associated with his great work, but they somehow never brought me a full realization that all these things are actually *there,* and most of them still pretty much as he left them. Their sight sharpens one's sense of him to a fine edge that nothing else will put on it. Just this effect, no doubt, is produced on the hordes of the faithful that I see at this season of the year crowding the trains to Lourdes; or in earlier times, upon those who travelled as best they could over the longer "pilgrim trail" that led beyond the mountains into Spain. One is impressed by the wisdom of the Church that recognizes the spiritual power of pilgrimages and organizes itself to get the benefit of it. Probably one of the principal weaknesses of Protestantism as a religious body is that it has largely overlooked this advantage.

At Chinon I joined another American amateur of Rabelais, and together we looked the town over afresh; then yesterday we went out from Chinon for an afternoon's walk over the battlefields of the most interesting war ever recorded in human history. Its interest will remain fresh and lively when the Great War or World War, as we call it—already half forgotten—shall have dropped into the limbo of indifference to keep company with the wars of Sargon and Hannibal. What council of war in London or Paris shall stand the test of four hundred years like the one reported in the thirty-third chapter of the First Book, when King Picrochole's officers expounded their plans for conquering the whole civilized world? Few among us can recall the name of a single division commander in the World War, but those of Picrochole's army are as near immortal as names can be:

> My lord Shagrag was appointed to command the vanguard, wherein were numbered sixteen thousand and fourteen arquebusiers together with thirty thousand and eleven volunteers. The great Touquedillon, master of the horse, had charge of the ordnance. . . . The rear-guard was committed to the Duke of Scrapegood . . . Thus being hastily equipped, before they would set forward they sent three hundred light horsemen under the conduct of Captain Swillwind, to discover the country.

This military enterprise of everlasting memory was the Great Picrocholine War, whose history is recounted most circumstantially by Rabelais, occupying almost exactly half of the First Book. It was fought out to

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a finish on a miniature terrain of something under six miles in length, along the country road between Lerné and Chinon. One can walk over the whole of it in a summer's afternoon, and have plenty of time for idling by the way.

Rabelais was nearly forty years old when he wrote this vast burlesque. By this time he was one of the best scholars living, one of the best physicians in France and head of the great hospital at Lyons, and thoroughly a man of the world, in the sense that he had had an all-round experience—what we should perhaps call "inside knowledge"—of every kind of life there was to know, and of every social order or class that France could furnish, from the peasantry to the nobility. He had already written the little volume on the exploits of the giant Pantagruel, which is printed in our editions as the Second Book. This became instantly so popular that in the course of a couple of years he decided to try his hand at something more of the same kind, so he took up the character of Gargantua.

Meanwhile he went back for a visit to the scenes of his childhood around Chinon, where his family lived, and where he had not been for over twenty years. With his story in mind, and having to find something for his young giant Gargantua to do to distinguish himself, it occurred to him to stage this tremendous war between Picrochole III, the king of Lerné, (then as now a village of twelve hundred inhabitants) and Grangousier, father of Gargantua, who seems to have been king of all out-doors, though his royal headquarters were on the farm of La Devinière, which was actually the property of Rabelais's father and the birthplace of Rabelais himself.

When Rabelais returned to visit his native scenes, he found his relatives deep in litigation with a neighbor named de Ste.-Marthe over a matter of trespass. The two families were the nabobs of the district, so the dispute became a local *cause célèbre,* and made a great stir. Ste.-Marthe had some interests at Lerné; and this, together with other incidents in the narrative, has made critics suspect that Rabelais had an animus, playing up Ste.-Marthe under a thin disguise as the rascally aggressor Picrochole, and his own father as the patient and pacific Grangousier.

But it is hard to reconcile this with what we know of Rabelais's temperament and experience. A cultivated man of the world does not take a trivial family feud so seriously as all that; he is far more likely to find it merely amusing, and divert himself with the earnestness of the rural gossip about its ins and outs. My American friend made what seems a much more sensible suggestion—though of course purely speculative, since there is no evidence either way—that in the Picrocholine War Rabelais is simply recalling and elaborating the visions of his childish imagination. Perhaps the neighborhood squabble may have brought them to mind, and may have even given personality to them by some sort of vagrant accidental association, but very likely not even that.

When the visitor looks over the lay of the land, he sees that this theory is pretty plausible. The house where Rabelais was born is still standing, in perfect condition, a stone farm-house of standard fifteenth-century architecture, with a high pointed roof. A beautiful outdoor staircase leads to the upper story, and the footsteps of centuries have worn grooves from two to four inches deep in the solid stone steps. There is no more striking testimony to the age of the structure than those footworn grooves. This house was the country-seat of the Rabelais family, and no doubt François Rabelais spent most of his boyhood summers there—long summers too, for the Touraine is in a privileged position with regard to climate, so that one may live pleasantly and comfortably on the countryside for more than half the year.

From the second-story window of this farmhouse one can look over the whole terrain of the Picrocholine War. Directly next door, less than a thousand yards away, was

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the abbey of Seuilly, of imperishable memory because Friar John of the Funnels lived there. Only a few vestiges of the abbey have survived its destruction in the religious wars, but one can still reconstruct its general outline with the aid of some old prints easily obtainable. One can easily make out the famous vineyard or *clos* of the abbey, where Friar John, armed with nothing but his staff, set on Picrochole's marauding soldiery who were stealing the vintage-grapes, and single-handed as he was "discomfited all those of the army that entered into the close of the abbey, unto the number of thirteen thousand, six hundred, twenty and two, besides the women and little children". It is almost certain that Rabelais got the rudiments of his education at this abbey; whether so or not, the prying curiosity of boyhood must have caused him to know it well, inside and out. Possibly some prototype of Friar John had caught him red-handed in depredations on the vineyard, and whaled him soundly—such a thing could easily happen. Earlier commentators have thought that he may have known some monk in the abbey who was more or less like Friar John, and that he built up this marvellous character on the basis of his recollections. If so, that monk was worth knowing, for Friar John stands with Panurge as (in my judgment) the greatest achievement in character-construction of any time or language.

One cannot see as far as Lerné from this second-story window, but looking to the south, one can see the château of Coudray, which with its neighboring lands Grangousier apportioned to Gymnast after the victory, as his reward. To the east one can see La Roche-Clermault, a little over a mile away, where Picrochole shut himself up for the tremendous siege described in the forty-eighth chapter; one can even make out the course of the assaulting party led by Friar John, who commanded "six companies of foot, and two hundred horsemen well armed, and with great diligence crossed the marsh and valiantly got up to the top of the green hillock, even to the highway that leads to Loudun". The hillock is still there, and so is the highway. Looking at this road, and at the highway between Lerné and Chinon, which skirts the Rabelais property, a hundred-and-fifty yards from the farmhouse itself, one realizes once more that a roadway, a street, is the most enduring of all human institutions and devices.

Just north of La Roche-Clermault is the Ford of Vède and the Miller's Bridge, where Gargantua "found all the ford covered with dead bodies, so thick that they had choked up the mill and stopped the current of its water". This stream in reality is about ten or twelve feet wide. It would drive a mill after a fashion—it still does, after a fashion—but not much of a mill. Farther on, a little to the north-east is the wooded area into which Picrochole had "sent Captain Tripet with a great army to set upon the wood of Vède and Vaugaudry; and that they had already plundered the whole country, not leaving cock nor hen, even as far as to the wine-press of Billouard". This wine-press lies still farther to the eastward, a little more than a mile from Chinon. It is still there, still under the same name, and still in business, keeping up the barrier against modern industrial innovation, and withal squeezing out a pretty stiff and self-respecting beverage. The Touraine wines, speaking generally, have a good deal of latent energy, and among them all the Chinon wine takes a back seat for none.

Rabelais had an imagination like Priapus's memory, which he speaks of in the prologue to the Fourth Book, "large enough to fill a butter-firkin". Having such an imagination as a man, one would think he must have had it as a child. What, then, would be more natural for an imaginative child standing at this second-story window with this landscape spread before him, than that he should fill the whole scene up with soldiery? If his imagination needed a start, there were plenty of wars going on. When he was eight years old, Louis XII, "the Father of the People",

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was defeated by the Spaniards on the Garigliano. In the next six years there were constant and busy preparations for war with Venice, and when the Venetians were defeated at Agnadello in 1509, Rabelais was but fourteen. All the days of his youth were full of war, full of talk about war, and it is the easiest supposition in the world that this state of things was reflected in his imagination by something very like the Picrocholine War.

Even the grotesque proportions of this engagement suggest the distortions that childhood puts upon the relations of distance and space. Those of us who were born in a cottage can remember that it seemed very spacious, and to a childhood antedating the motor-car, a few city blocks seemed an endless distance. When one reads the Picrocholine War with this idea in mind, one is struck by seeing how closely a great deal of it corresponds with a child's view of his surroundings. For instance, Picrochole sets out from Lerné—as we have said, a village of twelve hundred people—and marches towards Seuilly, three miles east, with an army whose shock troops alone are forty-six thousand, and with nine hundred and fourteen pieces of artillery. He quarters this huge array in La Roche-Clermault, which is even smaller than Lerné. This would be about equivalent to quartering the United States army in Andover, New Jersey. Grangousier's regular army "which he maintained at his ordinary garrison towns of La Devinière, Chavigny, of Gravot and of Quinquenais" consisted of—

> two thousand cuirassiers, threescore and six thousand foot-soldiers, and six and twenty thousand dragoons, attended by two hundred pieces of great ordnance, two and twenty thousand pioneers, and six thousand light horsemen, so well befitted with their commissaries, sutlers, farriers, harness-makers, and other such like necessary members in a military camp . . . so well disciplined that they seemed rather to be a concert of organ-pipes or mutual concord of the wheels of a clock, than an infantry and cavalry, or army of soldiers.

These four places were—and are—nothing but farms, three of them at least, and perhaps all of them, the property of the Rabelais family. One would have hard work to scrape up a hundred people among all four. Perhaps the top notch of childish fancy is reached in the forty-seventh chapter, where it is shown that thirty neighboring villages, most of them so tiny that they hardly show on a district map, confederated in support of Grangousier, and "offered him what assistance they could afford, both in men, money, victuals, and other necessaries for war".—

> The money which by the joint agreement of them all was sent unto him amounted to six score and fourteen millions two crowns and a half of pure gold. The forces wherewith they did assist him did consist of fifteen thousand cuirassiers, two and thirty thousand light horsemen, four score and nine thousand dragoons, and a hundred and forty thousand volunteer adventurers. These had with them eleven thousand and two hundred cannons, double cannons, basilisks.

All these exaggerations seem—to us, at least—to have a specifically childlike quality. One can get a faint and far-off suggestion of their flavor in the memory of one's own childhood and its fancies. Hence it seems fairly reasonable to think that the sight of the long-forgotten countryside may have brought back some of the dreams and visions of his early days, and that these may have served him generously as the basic material of the Picrocholine War.

A lovely countryside it is, moreover, just at this point. One cannot say so much for what lies above and below it. Between Seuilly and Lerné the land lies in rather a dull stretch, and there is nothing very interesting from La Roche-Clermault to Chinon until one comes in sight of the river. Between Seuilly and La Roche-Clermault, however, the country is delightful and has somewhat the appearance of being fertile, as well as the reality. This remark sounds odd, perhaps, but not to

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anyone who has been here. Panurge calls the Touraine "the garden of France", and it was the park and playground of royalty, as every tourist knows—knows to his sorrow, after he has gone the desolating round of the châteaux that have their being here. But one gets the impression everywhere of a very poor soil. Seeing a similar soil in America, one would say that it could not grow white beans, yet here it must be good, for people get good crops off it. There is no accounting for this miracle, and after a while one gets tired of puzzling over it and gives it up. Somebody in the Rabelais family, however, had the great brain and level head to pick out a property that looks moderately cultivable, and that is also in the one conspicuously "sightly" situation, as the New Englanders say, in the whole district.

But it is time that we gave the intending literary pilgrim some guide-book information. To reach Chinon from Paris, you go first to Tours, four hours (with luck) on a standard French railway which keeps you thinking about insurance when you ought to be enjoying your travels. When this thought becomes oppressive, you fall to wishing you could see some Continental maintenance-of-way men, and wondering what they look like, and where they come from, and whether they find their own way back to the asylum when the day's work is over, or whether they have to be escorted. When these artists lay out a railway, they do not stagger the rails—they lay them with the joints opposite each other instead of with one joint opposite the middle of the other rail, hence giving you a jolt at every rail's length. Discovering this, you find out why you are so tired at the end of an hour's ride. Then presently you notice that the two largest towns served by this railway are off at one side. To reach Orleans or Tours, you leave the main line at a junction and go in on a "plug". There seems no rational way of accounting for this. When you finally get into Tours after this experience, you do not go on to Chinon, though it be but an hour further. You stay overnight in Tours, and you sleep without calling in anyone to rock you. You wake up early, though—street noises. Then as your senses are slowly dragged back to life, you wonder why Continental hotels have all their good rooms on the front of the house, and whether the typical Frenchman really likes noise or whether he accepts it as a part of a fixed and invariable order of existence, as he does Racine, Molière, *œufs à la coque,* Corneille, *haricots verts,* Victor Hugo, and other crystallizations of tradition. But you never find out.

Once in Chinon, however, these gloomy speculations subside and life looks up again. The geography of the stroll over the battlefield of Picrochole's war is an easy matter; you cannot miss it. One must go afoot. The motor-car is useful—I suppose in these days of enervation, one might call it indispensable—for getting about among the scenes of Rabelais's later life in the Poitou, but it is impracticable here. You cross the river from Chinon, go over the Nun's Bridge—so-called because in the sixteenth century the abbess of Fontevrault had a franchise on it and collected tolls. This bridge spans a marsh. Passing the wine-press of Billouard, you turn off at Parilly and take the road to La Roche-Clermault. Or, if you wish to spare yourself this preliminary walk, you take a local train—what the Germans so finely call a *Bummelzug,* which is just what this French train is, fearful and wonderful in its goings-out and comings-in. This will take you to La Roche-Clermault in fifteen minutes—think of the ignominy of there being a railway station in Picrochole's stronghold, and for a *Bummelzug* at that!—and your walk may begin there.

All there is to it is to follow the highway, with a copy of Rabelais in your hand for reference, and to keep your imagination stirring. You pass by the Ford of Vède, over the Miller's Bridge, "the bridge at the mill", mentioned in the thirty-sixth chapter as the scene of the wholesale drowning of Picrochole's

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men. Here the highway turns to the left, whence there are two roads leading to Seuilly, running nearly parallel. The one at the right leads past La Devinière and is connected with it by a lane. Beyond this lies Seuilly, where, aside from getting the lay of the old abbey's property and especially of Friar John's vineyard, it is interesting to look over the church wherein doubtless Rabelais was baptized. It is still in first-rate running order, and looks as if it might last a long time yet.

There is no reason for going farther on foot towards Lerné. When motoring, perhaps one should some time go through the town and give it a kindly glance for the sake of the cake-bakers who started the war by falling foul of Grangousier's subjects. Curiously, there is to this day a great deal of bad feeling between the inhabitants of these two villages, Lerné and Seuilly, as there was, no doubt, in Rabelais's time; even though the cake-baking industry perished long ago, and though there are hardly any shepherds left on Grangousier's fields, the village rivalry persists.

Turning back to La Devinière, you find a straight path running south from the farm-entrance, across the two highways to Seuilly, down to a little brook which feeds the Vède. At its foot by the brookside is a circular growth of very old willows, forming a sort of natural amphitheatre or circus of turf. Here undoubtedly it was that Gargantua was born. After the feast described in the fourth chapter of the First Book, to which Grangousier had "invited all the burghers of Cinais, of Seuilly, of La Roche-Clermault, of Vaugaudry, . . . all stiff drinkers, brave fellows, and good players at nine-pins"—it is recorded that "after dinner they all went tag-rag together to the willow grove, where on the green grass, to the sound of the merry flutes and pleasant bagpipes they glanced so gallantly that it was a sweet and heavenly sport to see them so frolic". Gargamelle's accouchement, it will be remembered, was a little premature, and it took place as she was reposing "upon the grass, under the willows", where Gargantua was born in a marvellous and non-natural manner, by way of his mother's left ear.

On the way back to Chinon, one may go again by the highway through La Roche-Clermault, or by a road through the woods, where one passes near the site of the castle of the Woods of Vède, which was demolished at one stroke by Gargantua, after Picrochole's garrison had "shot at him above nine thousand and five-and-twenty falcon-shot and harbuscades, aiming all at his head". Either road takes one to Parilly, whence one continues on over the Nun's Bridge and into Chinon.

Tomorrow we shall go by motor seven miles or so to Panzoult near Croulay, where dwelt "a very famous sibyl, who is endowed with the skill of foretelling all things to come". Her grotto or cave dwelling is still on exhibition, though not many people come to see it. Her tradition survives on the countryside, unimpaired by time. She it was who was consulted by Panurge on the question whether or not he should marry, and whether, if he did marry, his wife would be faithful to him. On our way there we pass through Rivière where Picrochole, in his headlong flight from defeat, killed the horse that stumbled under him. "Then, not finding any other whereon to remount, he was about to have taken an ass at the mill that was thereby. But the miller's men did so baste his bones and so soundly bethwacked him that they made him both black and blue with strokes, then stripping him of all his clothes, gave him a scurvy old canvas jacket wherewith to cover his nakedness." The mill is still there. One gets the idea, in fact, that in these regions a mill is a pretty permanent institution. You can still find your way from one to another by the aid of a map four hundred years old, and you do not miss many of them, nor, apparently, are many of them out of business.

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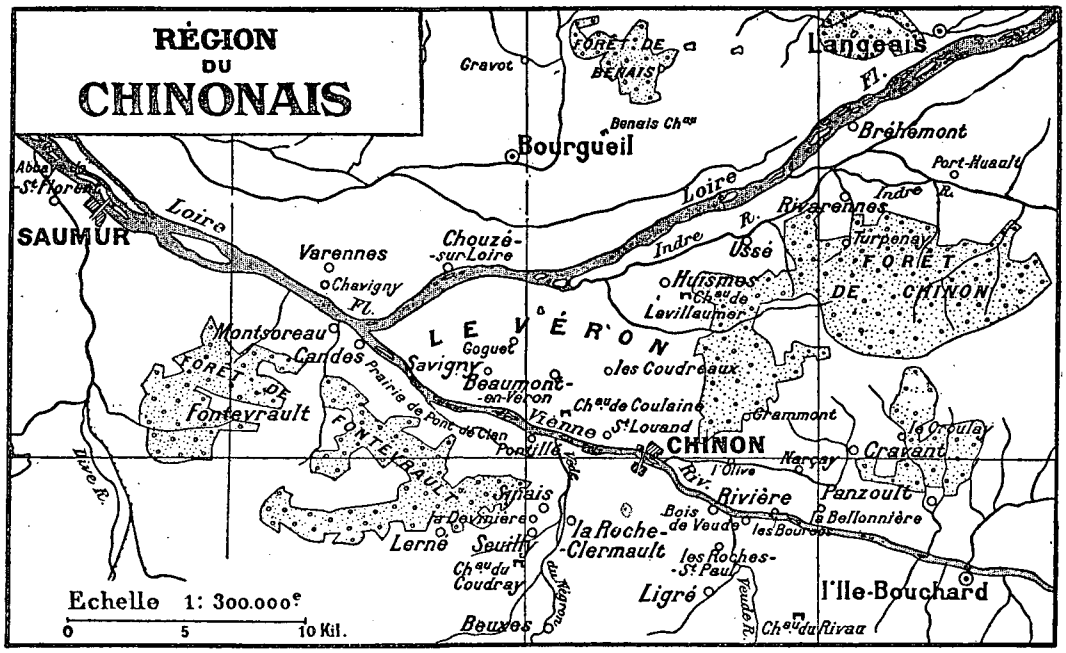
Mass-production methods may soon drive them off the face of the earth, but as yet they linger and seem to prosper.

From Panzoult we shall go on to l'Isle Bouchard, three or four miles further, an interesting place, where Picrochole may be said to have disappeared from view, though he was known subsequently to have crossed the Indre at Port-Hualt, a dozen miles to the north, near Azay-le-Rideau. "What is become of him since, we can not certainly tell; yet was I told that he is now a porter at Lyons, as testy and choleric as ever." We shall not follow him; it is painful to see the sons of the *ancien régime* in reduced circumstances. We shall bid farewell to his memory at l'Isle Bouchard.

The most pleasant and vivid impression that we brought home from our afternoon's walk was that of the general view that one gets from La Devinière. The landscape seems almost made to order as a theatre for a miniature mimic war. We have been pretty well over the whole region of the Chinonais, and as far as we know, there is not anywhere in it another scene as suitable to Rabelais's purposes as the one he surveyed in his boyhood from his own second-story window.



H. CLOUZOT, Inv. *Dessiné par V. Huot*

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THE HISTORY OF THEIR BOOKS

X. OWEN JOHNSON

by Arthur Bartlett Maurice

WHEN the century was in its infancy, before the deliberate exploitation of the pseudo and professional Bohemianism of Greenwich Village, there was a studio on the south side of Washington Square that was a pleasant haven on the coast of Bohemia. The studio was shared by the painter-man Gilbert White and the writer-man George Barr Baker. Today there is a somewhat austere Mr. Baker associated with the semi-official *entourage* of President Hoover. There is also a Gilbert White who figures in every new book written about Paris, and who occasionally visits his native land for the purpose of carrying out some exalted commission for the decoration of a state capitol.

Once in the studio there was "thrown" a famous party. Among the invited guests there was one uninvited guest; a strikingly self-confident, self-contained young woman from the Far West who calmly announced that she had just arrived in New York, that she had heard that there was to be an artists' party in the studio, that she had never attended such a party, and had decided that she would find out what such a party was like. The first guest to arrive, she was the last to leave. She was the definite model from whom Owen Johnson drew his Doré Baxter, the heroine of *The Salamander,* the story of the then ultra-modern young woman who walked serenely through the flame that never even singed her.

Relatively 1914, when *The Salamander* appeared, was an age of innocence. Strange as it seems today, the book then startled by its boldness, its daring presentation of a type that was just beginning to throw off the Victorian shackles. Its publication marked a radical departure in the author's work. It was the beginning of the fourth stage. The first stage was represented by the stories *Arrows of the Almighty* and *In the Name of Liberty,* begun at least when Owen Johnson was still an undergraduate at Yale. They were relatively negligible, the work of a boy who had read and digested much romantic fiction, and who was going through the inevitable "sedulous ape" period.

A few years later came *Max Fargus,* a long step forward in the point of workmanship, a grim tale of the shady side of the New York law courts, involving chicanery and *chantage.* But the "sedulous ape" period had not entirely passed. *Max Fargus* was written under the shadow of Balzac, according to the Balzacian method. As Balzac had searched Paris frantically until he had found the name "Z. Marcas", Owen Johnson prowled doggedly about New York until he had established a definite setting of the scene for every episode of *Max Fargus.* A mere street or neighborhood was not enough. In the street or neighborhood there had to be the right house. That house had to have the right age and architecture.

To illustrate. The tale opened in the

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"House of the Tin Sailor" on one of the side streets east of Second Avenue near Stuyvesant Square. Once the house existed. A third of the way down the block, on the north side, there projected from it the figure of a tin sailor, balancing two paddles which the wind caused to revolve. Out of that curious figure, long since gone, grew the story. Another landmark contributed much to its development. As an amateur reporter, in company with friends employed by the New York *Sun,* Owen Johnson frequented the Jefferson Market Police Court for the purpose of studying the seamy side of life. Near the Court, on West Tenth Street, was a row of dingy, undersized buildings, used by the lawyers. The most pretentious offices in the row were those of the Alonzo Bofinger and Hyman Groll of the story, the latter drawn directly from a lawyer then known to every New York newspaper reader.

The third stage was the "Lawrenceville stories", which included *The Eternal Boy, The Varmint, The Tennessee Shad, The Humming Bird, Skippy Bedelle,* and carried on with *Stover at Yale.* The first stories to appear were five written in Paris in the winter of 1907-08, but for the germ of the idea one has to go back to the middle 1890's, when Owen Johnson, from his lofty pinnacle as editor of the school publication, issued to the members of his staff, among them incidentally Stephen French Whitman and George Agnew Chamberlain, his historic ukase: "Don't invent; interpret!".

Twenty years ago those riotous stories of schoolboy life sent the youth of the land into a gale of laughter, and their popularity still persists. They were "stories with a key", and not a very intricate key. Under the flimsiest of disguises is a roster of Lawrenceville and Andover, Yale and Princeton football heroes of the "golden 'nineties". "Cap" Kiefer was "Cap" Kafer; Charlie De Soto was Charlie De Saulles; "King" Lentz was "King" Wentz; "Turkey" Reiter was "Bozey" Reiter; Cockerill of "The Varmint" was Garry Cochran; the football captain of "Stover at Yale" was James Gamble Rogers; and the revolutionary Brockhurts of the same book was drawn from Henry Hunt, later the reform mayor of Cincinnati.

There is extant an old group picture of the 1896 editorial board of the *Olla Podrida* with Owen Johnson as editor-in-chief, and gathered about him "Flash Condit", "Old Ironsides", "Ladders", "Snorkey Green", "The Duke of Bilgewater", and "The Great Big Man". The wily "Doc" McNooder was "Doc" McNider. John Humperdink Stover was a composite character. So was "Brian de Boru" Finnegan, one of his attributes having been drawn from a harmless eccentricity of the writer of this paper. To this day appear new claimants to the distinction of having been the original of "Hungry" Smeed, who established the "great pancake record".

In his books dealing with a wider world than the world of schoolboy and college life Owen Johnson has been more guarded in drawing from the living model, yet a little shrewd guessing will establish the identity of many of the characters. The novel, *The Sixty-First Second,* grew out of a short story "One Hundred in the Dark". In the shorter tale first appeared "Quinney, tall and gaunt as a friar of the Middle Ages", in reality Edward Simmons the painter; De Gollyer, in reality Christian Brinton, the art critic; and Steingalt, in reality Albert Sterner, the portrait painter. In the same book Gunther was undoubtedly J. P. Morgan the Elder, and Majendie of the Atlantic Trust Company, Barney of the Knickerbocker Trust Company.

Dangerfield of *The Woman Gives* was drawn from the late Willard Metcalf, the painter. That book was originally written with the title "Teagan's Arcade". Fifteen years ago there was a strange Bohemia in a building that stood at the intersection of Broadway and Columbus Avenue. The building covered a block, bisected by an arcade, and rose six stories in the form of an enor-

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mous H. It was a house of mystery with its dim passageways, and countless exits which led through tunnels or over roof-top bridges to adjoining structures. It was the setting of the scene for *The Woman Gives,* and the author called it "Teagan's Arcade". Similarly Westover Court, a strange oasis of quiet within a stone's throw of Longacre Square, was, under the name of "Ali Baba Court" a protagonist of *Making Money.*

Other books than *The Woman Gives* have eventually appeared under titles different from those in the original design. *The Salamander,* written in Florence, was planned as "The Precipice". One day, reading Benvenuto Cellini, Mr. Johnson came upon the passage alluding to the salamander, and it seemed to fit his story. *The Wasted Generation,* written in Paris, in war days when Owen Johnson was doing the work that won him the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, was in first draft "The Tragic Generation". The description of the transatlantic journey under war conditions in the story was an exact description of a crossing made together by Mr. Johnson and the writer on the *Chicago* in May, 1917. Mr. Johnson's latest novel, *Sacrifice,* was begun as "Polyandry", and carried on as "The Storm".

NATIVITY

by Willa Muir

Since unto us a son is given,
How infinite is grown my worth!
For the round of my breast is all his heaven,
And the spread of my knee his share of earth.

And since our love engendered him,
How infinite his worth is grown,
Who now can stir each separate limb,
And sleep and wake and laugh alone.

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PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHS OF FIFTEEN AMERICAN AUTHORS

by Doris Ulmann

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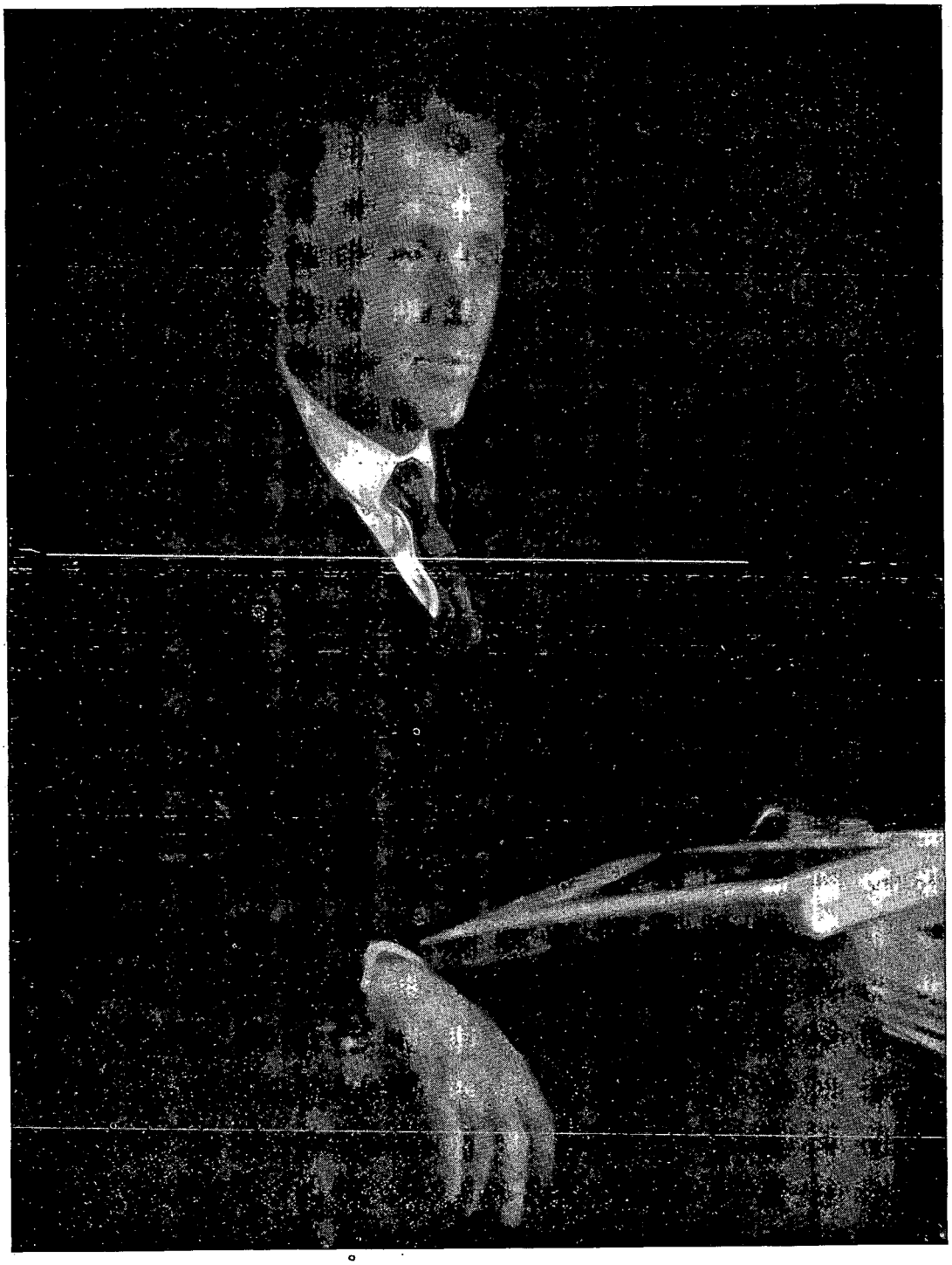

ROBERT FROST

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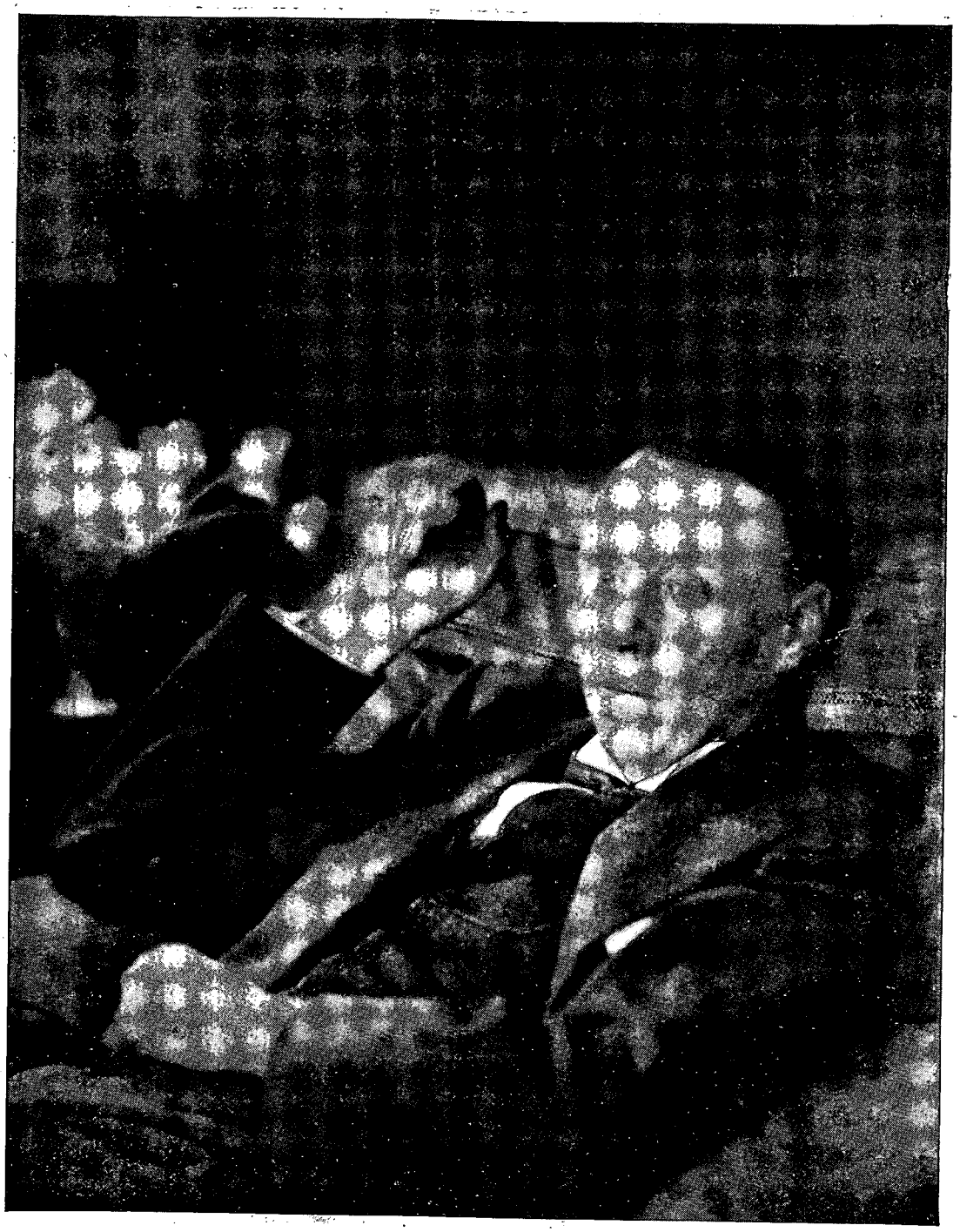

SINCLAIR LEWIS

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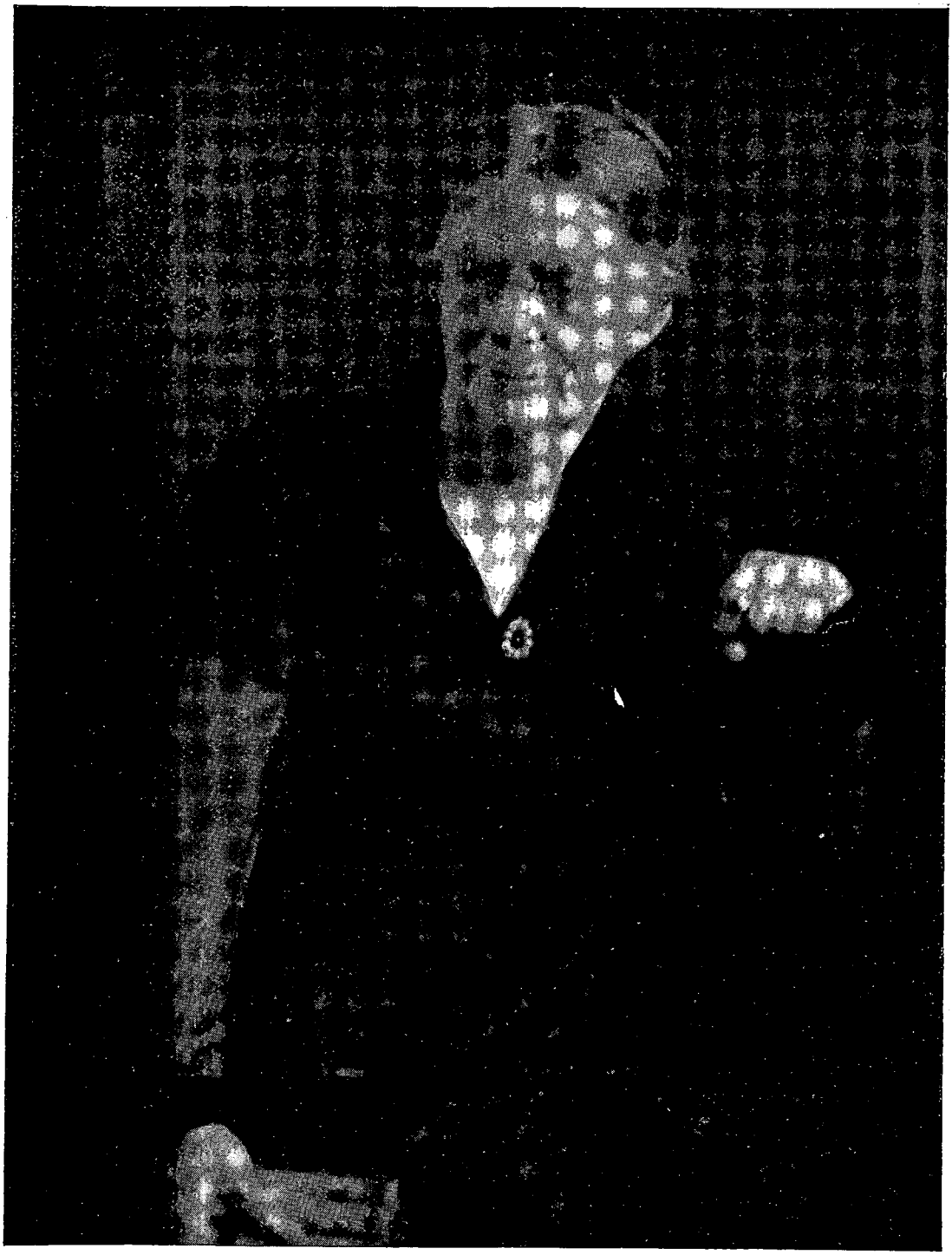

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

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ZONA GALE

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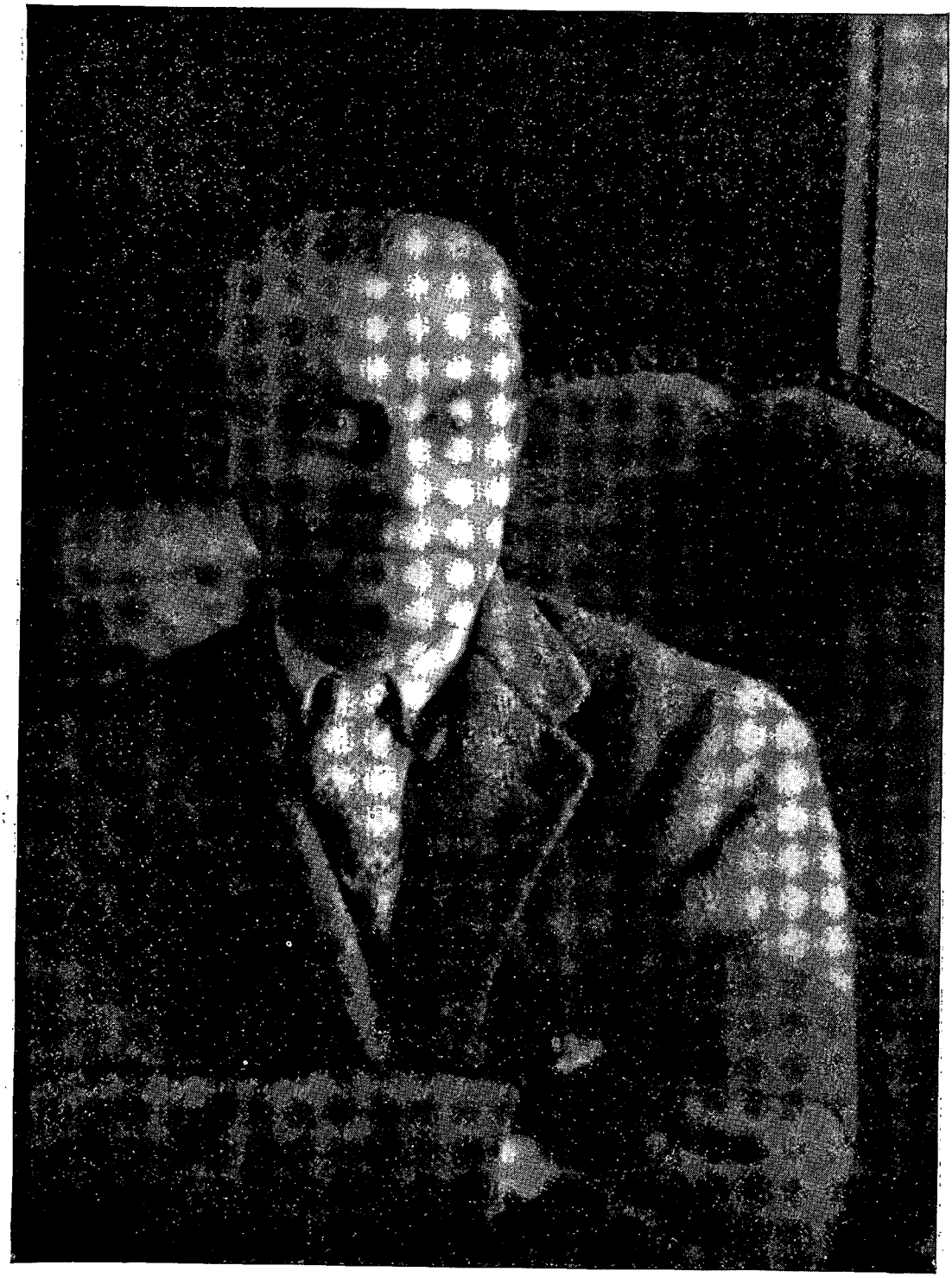

STRUTHERS BURT

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DUBOSE HEYWARD

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JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

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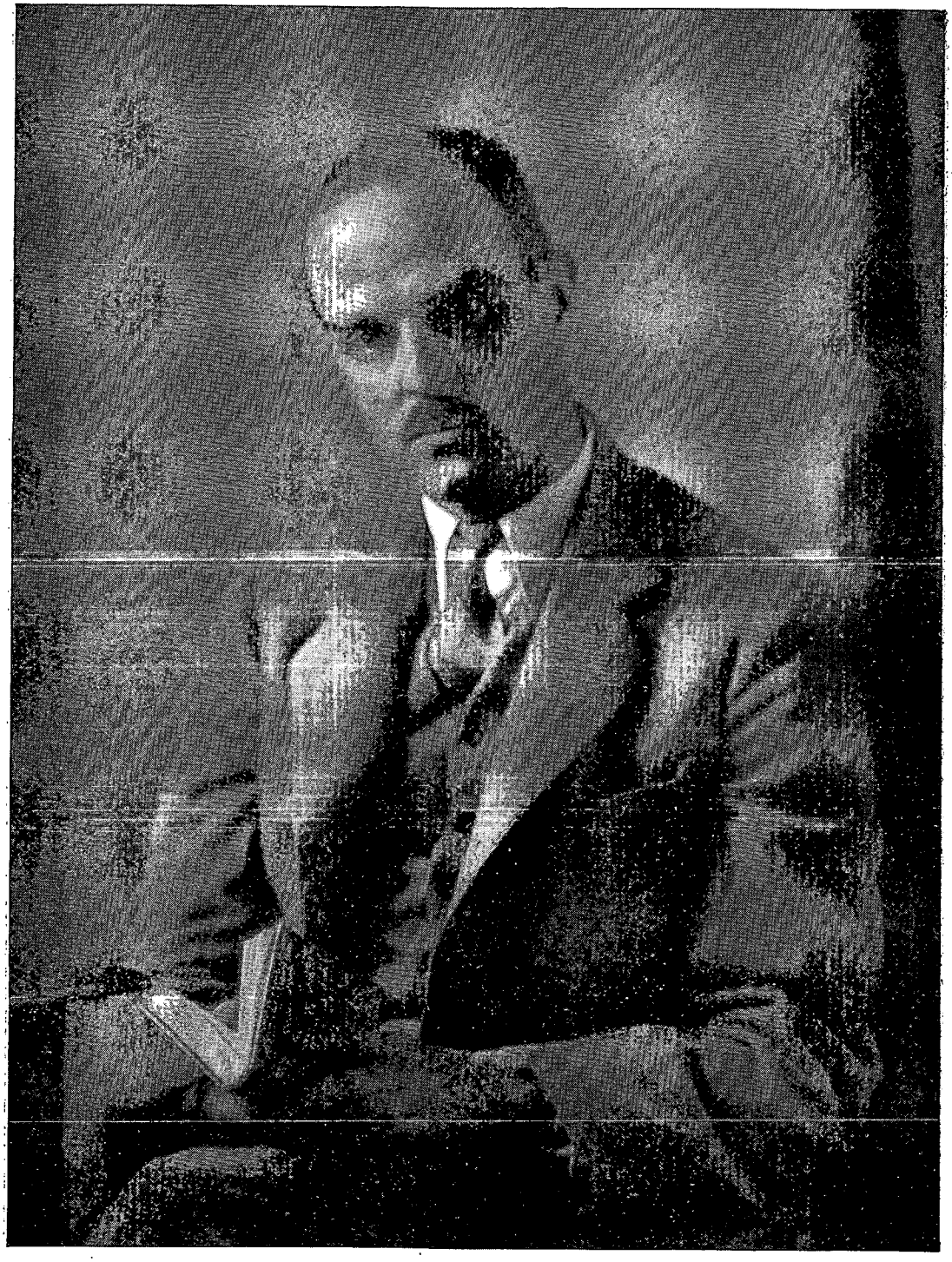

THORNTON WILDER

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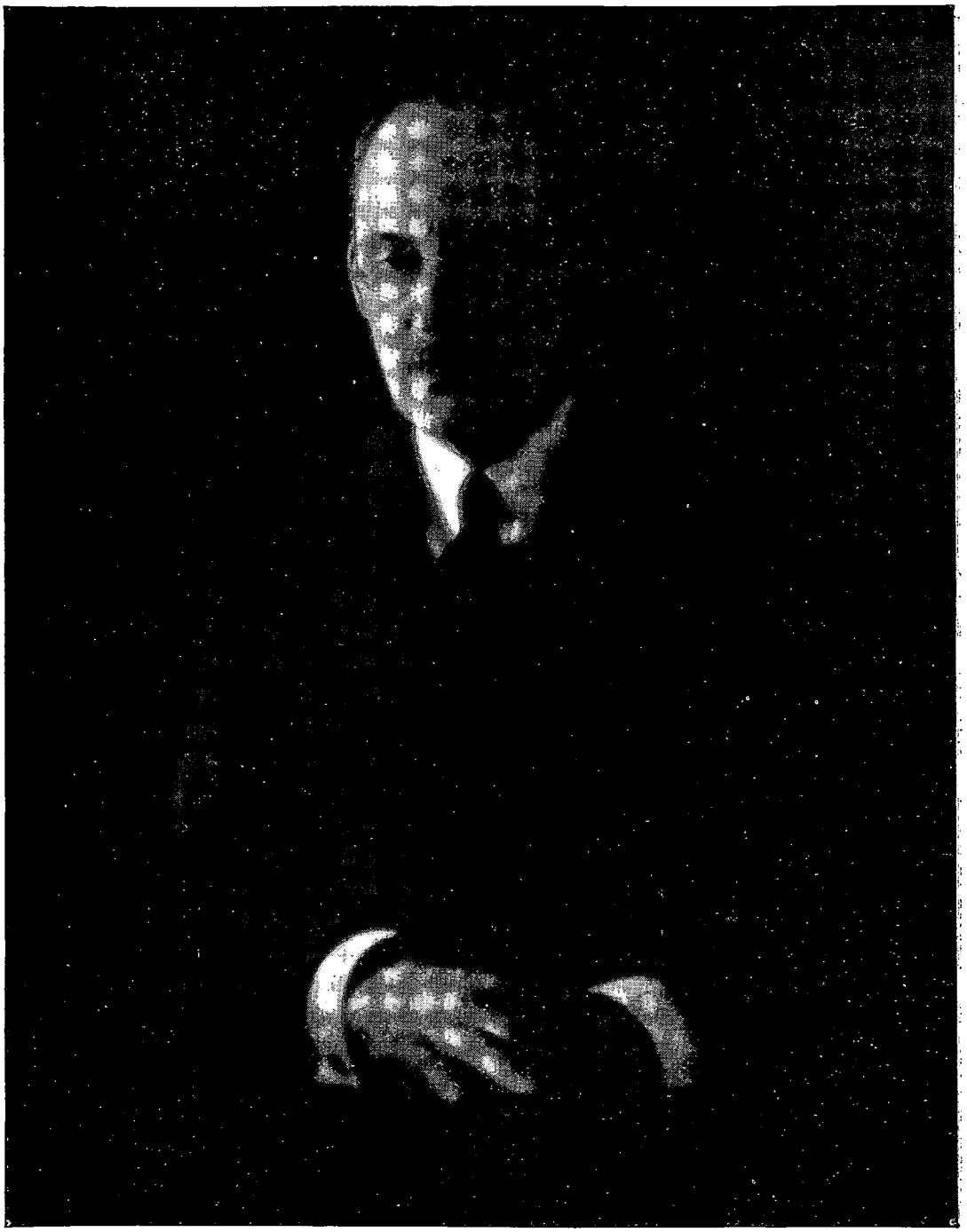

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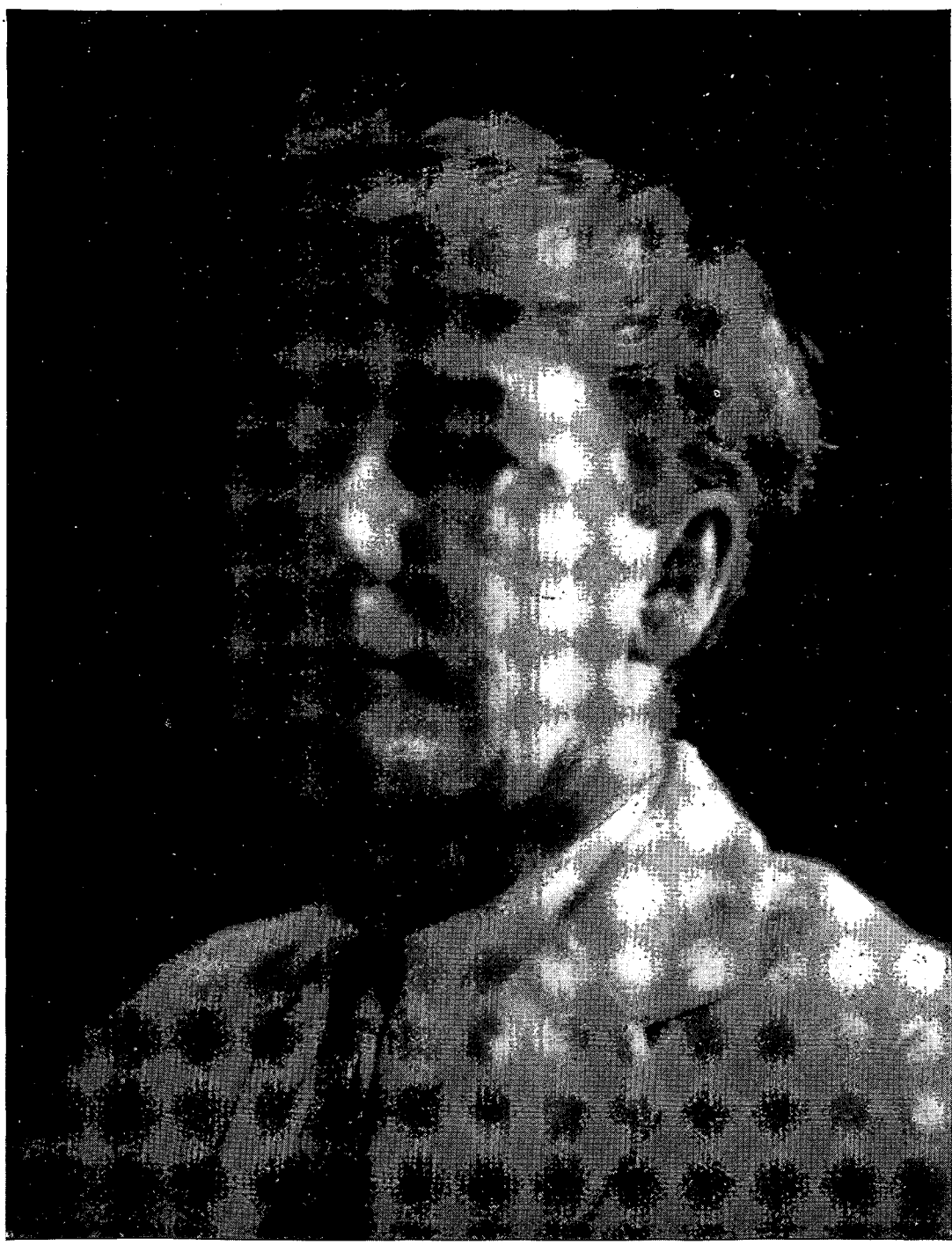

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WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

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THOMAS WOLFE

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A LETTER FROM ABROAD

by Rebecca West

When England became pagan—André Gide and Anne Douglas Sedgwick—André Gide and Robert Hichens—André Gide and Dostoievski—The fantasy and symbolism of an early novel—Wherein lies Gide's power—Terrible children in Gide and Cocteau—Will "The Innocent Voyage" become a classic?—The prevalence of books in France.

London, October.

I HAVE crawled about on all fours ever since I visited the Cathedral of Aix-en-Provence and the *gardienne*—a magnificent old lady, with the proud face and stiff officious bearing of a Pope, and a straight back rising from her immense haunches like a wheat-sheaf from a field—pointed her several pounds of keys at the tapestries in the choir and announced: "These hung for several hundred years in St. Paul's Cathedral in London". (They didn't. They had come from Canterbury before Wren was born.) *"But, of course, when England became pagan, they were sold, along with all the other sacred things."* What a picture of impious ruin! She was so much surer about it than I have ever been about anything that I was at a hopeless disadvantage. Also, no one could watch her thick white eyebrows meeting in disapprobation as she spoke without believing that all the Nordics were heathen and damned. Was that a moment to get up and say that there was one writer considered great in France who I could not believe could have gained half his reputation if he had written in England or in America?

Yet I could no longer hold back my enraged conviction that if we admire André Gide we are simply having something put over on us. In Aix-en-Provence I had bought Gide's latest book, *l'Ecole des femmes,* (which Knopf has brought out in translated form on your side) and I read it in bed at Arles, cursing freely because I could see no difference between it and one of the less happy productions of Anne Douglas Sedgwick. There is the same mechanical dodge of showing the reader an intolerable character, and then letting another character pass from deluded admiration of it to complete realization of its true nature. These characters are throughout completely static; they collect information about each other and adjust their opinions in consequence, but they do not themselves alter. There is the same difference between this and a real novel in which characters live and develop as there is between straw and grass; but although straw can be put to some good use (though I cannot for the life of me remember what) this dry and unnecessary exposition of ideas that were already established in the mind of both author and reader before the book was begun can serve no purpose. All it can do is to encourage smugness on the part of the reader, who at the end can say, "Ah, I saw through him all the time!" It is done with the most complete incapacity for suggesting either the sensuous appearances of this earth, or anything

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like the feeling that the psychic drama sets up inside people's heads. There is nothing in these pages except the drabbest, "he-said-and-she-said" recitation of the facts (not the essence) of the theme.

Am I showing myself a tasteless ignoramus that cannot appreciate austerity and subtlety? I am not. I know my *Adolphe* and I perceive that in that masterpiece Constant puts in all that Gide leaves out. It is simple in its style, but complex enough in its perceptions.

* * *

"We will leave that book behind," I said in the morning to my companion, as we were packing; "it isn't nearly as good as the rest of Gide . . ." and immediately I had that hollow feeling in the mouth which comes when one suspects oneself of talking nonsense. For this, I realized, was not the first time I had used those words. I had, in fact, said them so often before and in such circumstances that they certainly must be nonsense; for my lips have formed them every time I have set down a book by Gide. What did I mean by this inferentially admirable "rest of Gide"? Because I couldn't help feeling that I did mean something. During the next few days, all over France, I tried to find out. I leaped from the automobile at Nîmes and bought *l'Immoraliste,* which I re-read that night in a tiny village under the steep chestnut forests of the Cévennes mountains; and in the morning, as I walked up the narrow main street, I wondered if the invention of printing had not been in some ways a mistake. For though this place can never have been anything but a huddling together of poor folks and a halt for benighted travellers, yet something seen through the archway claimed the eye as imperatively and deliciously as if it had been the jet of a fountain playing in the sunlight; and there was nothing radiant there, only an exquisite spiral staircase rising from the courtyard of a perfect early sixteenth-century house.

Man, I do believe, had a more natural turn for stone than for letters. The architects and masons who built that house cannot have been working in very favorable conditions but they had made a masterpiece. Gide, with a mind adapted to getting the best out of print, and finding the phrase that looks well in print, was in touch with all the significant print of his time; he had got caught in a cross-draught between the open doors of Dostoievski and Oscar Wilde, and in consequence he had produced in *l'Immoraliste* something uncommonly like the earlier works of Robert Hichens. This fee-faw-fum hokum about the man who takes his wife down to the desert though he knows it will kill her because of his appetite for stranger-than-matrimonial pleasures is nothing like as poignant a study in the incapacity of the neurotic to feel love as Dreiser's *An American Tragedy.*

The next day, in Le Puy, I bought *les Caves du Vatican,* and I found it, in spite of a magnificent opening, a tame re-hash of Dostoievski. The idea of the fraud that is got up to cheat simple souls into giving up their all, by a story that the Pope was being kept a prisoner in the cellars of the Vatican and had to be ransomed, is an attempt to fake, out of the possibilities of French life, something like the religious preoccupations and superstitions of Russian folk; and in the murder the intellectual, Lafcadio Wlinuki, commits on Amedée Fleurissoire, a simple soul on his way to Rome to pay the ransom, whom he throws out of a railway carriage for no earthly reason but that he would rather like to commit a murder, is a straight steal from *Crime and Punishment* and *The Possessed.* But when I bought Gide's essays on Dostoievski twenty-four hours later, at Clermont-Ferrand, I found them full not of criticism but of mimetic frenzies. He continually writes as if Blake, when he urges mankind to give itself up to the power of the demon (by which he meant nothing more than the impulsive force in the soul which cannot render an exact account of itself to the reason), is say-

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ing the same thing as Dostoievski, when he declares that man must go down into the depths of sin and disintegration if he is to reach the heights of holiness and wholeness through repentance. "This," as Leviticus keeps on saying testily, "is confusion."

* * *

But in Nevers I bought *Isabelle,* a novel that Gide wrote nearly twenty years ago, and I got a sense of his extreme power. It is a novel that bears no relation whatsoever to reality. I am not complaining simply that it is not realistic, for I have a tender spot for fantasy. But to be tolerable, fantasy, even more than a realistic novel, must have a solid basis in reality, as witness the extraordinarily dreamy tales of Hoffmann and his school; and this is the projection of an infantile fantasy, such as occupies the mind before sound observations of reality can be made, though it is set down with the craftsmanship of an inspired adult.

It is a tale told by a middle-aged man who, on a country walk with two friends, comes across the ruins of a château, and tells them of the experiences he had within its walls as a young scholar, when it was still the seat of an old family, and he had gone there to work on a rare manuscript in the library. The place was splendid, but there was a mysterious sense of tragedy and decay about it. The family consisted of an old Marquis and his wife, who were charming people, and a cousin of theirs and his wife, who are ridiculous and mentally defective; they are suspiciously like personifications of the two aspects, the reverent and the derisive, in which the child views the parents. There is also the Marquis's grandchild, a little crippled boy who had to hobble about in irons. This child's parents were never mentioned directly, but the young scholar discovered a miniature of an exquisitely beautiful girl named Isabelle, who proved to be the Marquis's daughter, and the mother of the boy. An old letter which he found hidden in a summer-house, and a gossiping Abbé, revealed to him that the girl was on the point of eloping with a young nobleman of the district when he was killed. This romantic story, and the beauty of the portrait, set the young scholar in a kind of brooding infatuation for her, and he hung about waiting for her to pay one of her nocturnal visits, which he knew the family unwillingly received from time to time. At last she came, and he spied on her as she begged her parents for money. Her implorations had a tawdry quality; she was in some indefinable way foul; he understood why the voices of those of the household whom he has persuaded to talk of Isabelle have been heavy with hate, as if they could have accused her of other things as well as crippling her child before its birth by the means she took to hide her pregnancy. (This, by the way, is a common accusation made by the neurotic against the mother. Byron repeatedly asserted that his lameness was due to his mother's "false delicacy before his birth", although actually he suffered from Little's disease, an affection of the Achilles tendon which has nothing to do with pre-natal conditions, and there is not the smallest reason to suspect poor rantipole Mrs. Byron of either true or false delicacy.)

Disillusioned, the young scholar went away, and came back after a lapse of time to find that the grandparents were dead and that Isabelle had come into the property. He found her sitting in the park, sewing a new ribbon on a battered old hat (here the laughter of those acquainted with the Freudian theory of symbols becomes almost too knowing) while she supervised the workmen who are ruining the estate by cutting down all the magnificent trees (here the laughter of those accustomed to the Freudian theory of symbols becomes deafening). He engaged her in conversation about the past, and she betrayed that she was responsible for her lover's death. Just before her elopement she took fright and told an old servant, who was compelled by his duty to protect the family

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honor, to lie in wait for the young man and kill him. Sickened, the young scholar turned his back on her and left her, and, by buying a farm where the crippled boy can live with the old servant, to whom apparently there attaches no blame, he redeemed the wrong she had done.

* * *

This is a poor novel, since it consists largely of unsubstantiated allegations about its characters unsupported by any artistic evidence. But it is a superb expression of a fantasy, such as inspired countless myths in folk-lore and religion, in which all the evil is attributed to the woman as mother and wife. The château (which is life) would be a place of beauty and virtue were it not for Isabelle (who is a personification of the sexual aspect of woman). She has crippled her child: that is, she has inflicted on him the pain and humiliation of birth. She does it as a result of her efforts to appear the virgin she is not; an incident which expresses the resentment the child feels when it realizes that its mother, whom it has always revered, must have had sexual relations with its father. By her portrait, that is by the romantic simulacrum of herself in which she can make the man believe when she has aroused his sexual passions, she entraps the young scholar; but when she comes to him in reality, she proves to be greedy, she makes demands for money: that is, for strength, for virility.

The passage in which the young scholar spies on her interview as she asks for money curiously resembles folk-tales and dreams which on examination prove to depict a child's emotion on realizing that his parents are sexual beings. Isabelle is so murderous that she kills her lover. She does worse than that: she makes an innocent male, in the person of the old servant, involve himself in the crime; and in that we can see the son's remorse that desire for the mother's attentions should have made him jealous of his father and his instinct to shift the blame onto the woman. The hat is one of the commonest symbols for a woman's sex; and the picture of Isabelle tricking out the old battered thing with a fresh gawd is inspired by hatred for the non-virgin woman. The tall tree is one of the commonest symbols for a man's sex; and that Isabelle is having them cut down is expression of the world-wide fear that sexual intercourse is dangerous to men. The young scholar saves his life by turning his back on Isabelle and is represented as then becoming rich, and being able to buy safety for the males whom she had ruined.

Not only does the story provide analogy after analogy with folk-lore and religious myth, it has the characteristic feeling of fantasy. It gives none of the exhilarating feeling of creative art; it is not an analysis of an experience and a synthesis of the findings into an excitatory complex. It is a soothing repetition of a fantasy with which we are already acquainted, it recalls us to an earlier, and less exacting, stage of our existence, just as a nursery lullaby takes us back to the time when we slept in a cot. Hence its quality of exquisite softness, its lovely feeling of familiarity and inevitability, which is the distinctive glory of this book and *la Symphonie pastorale,* another restatement of an easily identifiable fantasy.

* * *

There, I believe, is the secret of Gide's greatness. I still refuse to credit that he is a great novelist. I am convinced that he wrote *The Counterfeiters* not because he was experimenting with a new form but through sheer uncertainty; and that he makes his characters do the many odd things in it which are never completely explained not because he is giving a new symbolic account of human behavior, but because Dostoievski made his characters behave like that (though he always explains why) and Gide was casting round for any device he could find to help get his story home. The curious journal he published, giving his preliminary notes for *The*

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Counterfeiters, shows him as moved by the most adventitious forces in deciding the structure of his book. The greatness of Gide lies in his power to look within his own mind and honestly describe the fantasies that lurk at the bottom of it, the fantasies about life which he conceived as a child and which have determined the whole course of his mental life. This is not the highest greatness. The real giants of the earth record in their work their attempts to test out the veraciousness of these fantasies: they turn their attention to those parts of experience which their fantasies tell them are important, and try to reëstimate their importance in the light of the intellect. But in faithfully recording the fantasies themselves Gide places himself high above the dwarfs of the earth, who perniciously pretend that they have tested out their fantasies when they have not, and put out rationalized restatements of them that add nothing to human wisdom. He deserves eminence for being honest in that department of life where it is most difficult to achieve honesty, since it is the nature of man to be desperately shy of confessing his naïve imaginings about life. Furthermore, he has a special value in that he is absolutely contemporary. His readers would in any case regard him with a peculiar protective affection, because the fantasies he reveals are those which belong to the childhood of men and of the race, but they also feel for him a fervent loyalty such as soldiers feel for a general who leads them in some cause dear to all. His fantasies are their own. Anyone who attacks them is injuring the readers as well as the author. I can think of no writer in England or America who has such a devoted public as Gide.

* * *

That the content of Gide's mind is the content of the mind of a huge and important part of France is proved by consideration of a certain recent phase of his development. Anyone who holds a fantasy such as that which inspires *Isabelle* is loyally bound to come to the conclusion that since woman is so pernicious man would be well-advised not to love her; and to travel further to the conclusion that if man has a need to love and be loved he had better find a lover among his own sex. From recognizing this conclusion André Gide did not shrink; and in *Corydon,* which was at first privately printed and then publicly issued in 1924, he makes the admission that for many persons homosexuality must be the easy and obvious course. Now, persons of old-fashioned views might regard this as a very shocking admission, which must bring Europe to the same state of ruin as Rome and Athens; and persons of other views might regard this as the beginning of the Golden Age when, all being free to do as they may, there shall be no more conflicts, and harmony shall reign over all. But the next manifestations of his talents suggest a consequence that, I think, could have been foreseen by none.

About the same time that he made this admission an interest in naughty little boys which had been spasmodically visible in his work (notably in *l'Immoraliste*) flowered into an intense preoccupation with crimes committed by children. This came to colossal expression in *The Counterfeiters,* where the young are represented as lecherous, lying, thieving, murderous little monsters; and that this was not a passing phase is shown by the fascinated attention he turns on crimes committed by lads in his commentary in *la nouvelle revue française.* This is seen at once to be merely a new stage in his logical development, if we go back to the *Isabelle* fantasy and examine it again. Supposing that the hatred between man and woman that lies behind it is not an ultimate thing, but is an expression of something more abstract? It is not the woman who is the fixed object of the man's hatred; that external rôle is played by whatever gives him pleasure. The sense of guilt which plays such an important and such an insane part in his psychic life makes him

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turn against anything which extends his being by affording his joy. If it be a woman who does this for him, he will regard her as a criminal, and will accuse her; and if it be a youth who does it, he will treat him in exactly the same way. In other words, men are now going to bring the same charges against youths that they have always brought against women. They are going to allege that they are untrustworthy, dishonest, cold, cruel, and, above all, dangerous, and to dwell on all evidence which supports this thesis. These accusations will be made against children of both sexes, to cover the whole ground of homosexuality. Alas, the new tolerance seems likely to do but little to reduce the disharmony of life. For the fundamental ungraciousness, whereby those who ought to show kindness to each other in view of favors received spend themselves in the devising of cruelties, still stands, though the persons involved are differently grouped.

* * *

In this phase of Gide's development his contemporary quality is manifest. For another author who possesses it to a marked degree, Jean Cocteau, has just published a novel which is full of this fascinated and repelled contemplation of children. A reader who picks up *les Enfants terribles,* without regarding it as a reaction to the moral adjustments of the time, will find the treatment oddly intense for such a trivial subject. When one has read over a hundred and twenty pages and found nothing but an excited transcription of the insults exchanged by a schoolboy and his sister in the intervals of indulging in various adolescent habits, one becomes puzzled unless one remembers that the author is describing those whom the world (in so far as it has made the new acceptance) sees as the source of all pleasure and all sin, even as the early Fathers saw women.

This attitude towards criminal children which is common to Gide and Cocteau, and is discernible in many writers under their influence, cannot be traced to any other than this psychological cause. The obvious alternative explanation, that there is an increase in the number of crimes committed by the young in France which would challenge a novelist's attention, like any other startling social change, is lacking. There is an increase, but it is a trifling one; and on my return I found that, although the delinquent child is a rare and not enterprising figure in English life, a conspicuous example—for it is far nearer being the work of genius than either *The Counterfeiters* or *les Enfants terribles*—was the best-seller of the day in London.

I have commented in these columns on the dreary preference of some of the most influential English critics for novels that resembled tepid cups of sweet tea. I have now to record the astounding fact that these have reviewed Mr. Richard Hughes's *High Wind in Jamaica,* published in the United States under the title of *The Innocent Voyage,* exactly as if it were their favorite tepid cup of sweetened tea, instead of being the hot draught of mad, primal fantasy and poetry that it is. It actually owes much of its popularity to the efforts of a critic who has headed the opposition to Proust on the ground of his interest in the perverse and unpleasant. Yet in this account of the children who are captured by pirates and appal their captors by their cold-blooded villainy, the book looks down into the core of the embroilment of which poor Proust did but explore the periphery. It is certain that Mr. Hughes was not conscious of what he was doing, for if he had been he could hardly have done it. He had probably taken but little notice of the world's changing attitude to morality, in his Shelleyan innocence and preoccupation with ethereal matters. (It was of Mr. Hughes that a certain country servant said to her mistress, "A gentleman called when you were out, ma'am, but I didn't know if I ought to let him in, he looked so like Our Lord".) But, all the more candidly for that, he has been

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able to look into the human heart and describe the fantasies for and ungendered by the new situation.

The children on the pirate ship are given the power and magic of the desired; they are also given the guilt. It is not true that a little girl of ten would be likely to murder a man for such frivolous reasons as made Emily murder the Dutch captain; any more than it is likely that Isabelle would have contrived the murder of her lover, particularly at a moment when it involved her in the blackest tragedy. But pleasure is murderous: if those who give pleasure are to be justly described they must be shown murdering. Those who receive pleasure, on the other hand, are innocent victims; the pirates are represented as gentle and industrious souls whose choice of their career is inexplicable. And there is a gulf between them that is bridged by no community of substance. The children in the book are regarded as if they did not belong to the same species as grown-ups; just as, in the past, a great many imaginative works represented men and women as being two wholly different kinds of animal. And out of the pages Emily looks with just the same maddening claim on love and worship, the same repulsive indifference, as we may see on the stony faces of goddesses in which primitive man has recorded his emotions regarding the part that women play in his universe.

* * *

It is a book whose value it is impossible to estimate as yet, while the shock of its novelty still shakes us. I think it will rank among the great phantasmagorias of literature, somewhere below *The Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel,* but nearer to them in its power to bring up glittering beasts out of the strange seas where we sail, illuminating the snakes that coil their iridescence in human breasts. The trouble is that when the time for that estimation comes along the book may have foundered beneath the flood of current fiction, a fate which overtakes good work in England and America more easily than it ought to because of the imperfections of our bookselling system.

I have said that I bought these books by Gide in Aix-en-Provence, in Nîmes, in Le Puy, in Clermont-Ferrand, and in Nevers; and I mean that I stopped the automobile at the first bookseller I saw in these towns (which was always one of several) and was able to find a representative collection of Gide's early and recent books, from which I was able to make my pick. Now, could I have stopped an automobile at the first bookseller I saw in, let us say, Charleston, or in Atlanta, or in Nashville, or in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, or in Troy, and found a representative collection of the early and recent works of George Moore? I know that I could not in the equivalent towns in England. There are in France two factors which make it possible for a bookseller to carry a large stock, both of which seem at first sight to carry a hardship that outweighs their advantages. One is that books are so cheap that it is hard to imagine how authors make a living; and another is that the French public reads books rather than magazines, which is in a certain sense a loss; for that makes it ill-informed about matters with which English and American writers acquaint themselves through magazine articles. But these disadvantages are as nothing compared to the awareness of literature that this diffusion of books brings to the people, and the appreciation of it; and the confidence that as a natural sequel shows itself in the writings of French authors, giving them that serene audacity which is their special quality.

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CHRISTMAS BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

by May Lamberton Becker

One whose present duty it is to report upon new books for growing boys and girls must push past those for little children, charm they never so wisely. Not for him the admirable product of the United States, nor the results of international competition that this year enrich the American nursery with the crowding richness of color that illustrates the *Magic Flutes* of Josef Kozisek, the Czech (Longmans, Green, $3.50), the Hungarian scarlets of the Petershams's *Miki* (Doubleday, Doran, $2.00), the seasoned wisdom of Luigi Capuana's *Italian Tales* (Dutton, $2.50), the triumph of modern book-making manifest in Blaise Cendrars's *Little Black Stories for Little White Children* (Payson & Clarke, $2.00), taken over from the French, or the enchanting English offering, William Nicholson's *The Pirate Twins* (Coward-McCann, $1.50). These he must forego if he is to get space enough even to attempt a survey of some of the books from across the line that divides childhood from the next stage in human development. Fortunately for me, children's books have been already presented to the readers in the November Bookman by Helen Ferris, one of their most enlightened and sympathetic critics; it remains to take up the tale where that report left off.

If books for little children generally appeal more keenly to the reviewer than those for the next older age, it may be because a man usually writes a child's book to please himself and a book for youth is often written to please an audience, and one of whose likes and dislikes the writer is sometimes in fear and often in doubt. "I must continually stop to ask myself," a writer of boys' books once told me, " 'How would a boy between twelve and sixteen feel about this?' " More than one book for this age suggests between the lines that the author has thus constantly pulled himself up. It is, to be sure, an improvement that the author now cares what this age thinks and feels, and believes it worth taking into consideration; there was a time when he was comfortably sure that he knew what they ought to feel and think, and all he had to do was to tell them. In writing for young people it is better, of course, to be cautious than to be cautionary, but neither is good for literaure, whose production demands, one must admit, a certain soul-foremost recklessness.

One might say that the ideal writer for youth would be one who need not ask himself how a boy felt, because he just naturally knew. A good many writers do just naturally know about little children: Lewis Carroll in the *Alice* books, Sophie May in the *Dottie Dimple* series, Evelyn Scott in *Witch Perkins*, A. A. Milne in *The House at Pooh Corner*. A list like that could begin pretty far back and go on for a long time, but there are not many writers who can unfold the mind of youth with the triumphant certainty of Booth Tarkington, and even fewer who find what they see there, as he does, not only amusing

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but attractive. The teens cover a time of life most of us determine subconsciously to disown as soon as it is over. Though this is the great age for diary-keeping, few of these documents survive the writer's twenties, and scarce one is permitted to lie about after the writer becomes a parent. "I don't know about that," said a friend to whom I made this statement; "I still have *my* fifteen-year old diary." "Grand!" said I. "Let me read it." *"Not till I've read it first!"* said she. It is too bad; this is in some respects the most important and exciting period of one's life, and the very features that make us remember it a little later with some uneasiness—its groping awkwardnesses, the gorgeous cocksureness that manages somehow to exist along with an abysmal self-distrust, its conflicts with authority and with itself—are the stuff of our later life and incidentally of literature. But when the twenties take a hand, most of us shove our prep-school days scornfully out of mind; and by the time one is old enough to be willing to look this time of his own life straight in the eye, life has changed for the teens of another generation.

For while every new baby discovers a new world, the world he discovers is much the same from one generation to another. Mothers, cats, the eternal verities and counting-out games have changed but slightly since the Crusades. But for the last few decades at least, each batch of teens steps into a society that has changed since the last batch began to explore it. The wise parent is no longer so sure that he can train his child for success by doing just what he himself did to succeed; he may be training his boy for a business about to disappear or his girl for a demand no longer made by suitors. The teens must discover the world for themselves, and the former habit of many writers of drawing from their own experience at this time of life and thus setting back each generation's juveniles some twenty years is not now so helpful as it used to be. That is one of the reasons why I like Helen Ferris's *This Happened to Me* (Dutton, $2.50). Here are a series of situations that present-day girls in the teens found themselves facing, the sort of things adults say you will grow out of, but that more often grow on you, like a high shoulder or a scar. They are faults no high-spirited young person likes a grown-up to mention, much less to attempt to correct—but if, for example, you have a nasty temper and a fit of it will make your own pals look at you as if you had elephantiasis, you do something about it if you have the least desire to keep in with your pals. The crises described in this book are all met by the girls themselves; if you have dressed like your sister till the boys take you out in a set or not at all, if you have the only-child fixation, if the parlor furniture and the family make you slightly sick, then is the time to come to the aid of your own personality. I suppose teachers and guardians will read *This Happened to Me,* but it will handicap its usefulness if it becomes known as a book for teachers and guardians; it is for one girl at a time, the girl who is reading the book and finding in it herself, together with a number of other girls whose faults she will find comfortingly worse than her own.

This, however, is fiction only in form; it is based on the confidences of actual girls. Let us look at some of the full-fledged fiction that may honestly be said to enrich in some fashion the life of a young reader.

Some of the best of it lifts the reader altogether out of the twentieth century and sets him down in an earlier day. The best of this sets him down in a day whose spirit was not altogether unlike our own at its best. Charles J. Finger's *Courageous Companions* (Longmans, Green, $3.00) is like this: the time is that of Magellan's voyage, when new territory was being plucked from the uncharted seas and youth had the best chance in opening the unknown; the boy goes in this book with Magellan and plays a man's part. We have lately entered upon another such period of mapping the unknown on and over the

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earth, and in these enterprises youth is again at a premium.

Courage and resourcefulness carry an American boy through the terrors of the French Revolution in Alfred Bill's *The Red Prior's Legacy* (Longmans, Green, $2.00). William Stearns Davis, a historian who can make fiction reliable as well as entertaining, has used the French Revolution in *The Whirlwind* (Macmillan, $2.50), that boys who like *Scaramouche* will read, though this is taken from the adult list. *The Beckoning Road,* by Caroline Snedeker (Doubleday, Doran, $2.00), and *Susanna and Tristram,* by Marjorie Allee (Houghton Mifflin, $2.00), belong to the middle-west of the mid-nineteenth century, when the air of America was surcharged with ideas soon to break into action; the first takes place in Robert Owen's Utopian Commonwealth at New Harmony (Owen was a kinsman of the author) and the second in old Cincinnati, where two young people go in search of the head of the Underground Railroad. *The Jumping-Off Place,* by Marion Hurd McNeely (Longmans, Green, $2.00), takes up land when land was still to be had in the Dakotas—if you had courage and a good disposition. *Joscelyn of the Forts,* by Gertrude Crownfield (Dutton, $2.00), goes back to the frontier cities of the French and Indian War, with their imported elegance, local roughness, and danger always round the corner. *Children of the Border,* by Ella Shannon Bowles (Lippincott, $2.00), tells a story out of family history about two children taken in an Indian raid in early New England. *A Young Volunteer with Old Hickory,* by George L. Knapp (Dodd, Mead, $2.00), shows a boy fighting with Jackson's forces against the Creek Indians. In *The Lost King,* by Helen Coale Crew (Century, $1.75), Ulysses comes home to Ithaca. Mrs. Crewe is one of the few authors who can produce fiction for young people that instructors in high-school Latin and Greek can cheerfully recommend. Another has lately entered this group, for Paul L. Anderson's *With the Eagles* (Appleton, $1.75) is a real thriller and also a trustworthy bringing-back of the country and the conduct of Caesar's campaigns in Gaul.

Ever since Kipling wrote *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies,* writers for children have tried their hands at presenting English history by some such device as that used in these masterpieces—for no milder word will do for the best books for getting a vivid idea of a British background. *The Fighting Six,* by Margaret Leveson Gower (Harcourt, Brace, $2.00), makes a family of children visit a cross aunt and in their endeavor to keep out of her way find a "magic for six" that takes them into the Civil War of 1647, where they find two of their own ancestors. The necessity for continuous narrative makes the device rather complicated: Kipling cut his into separate stories and kept continuity by having "oak, ash and thorn" wipe out from the children's memories each separate experience. *The Second Mate of the Myradale,* by John Lesterman (Harcourt, Brace, $2.00), shows a boy of eighteen keeping his head through a sailing-ship voyage in the 'fifties that takes in mutiny, shipwreck and cannibals. One might call Padraic Colum's *A Boy in Eirinn* (Dutton, $2.00) an historical novel, even if the new chapter added for this new edition does bring it to the present day; there is much folk-lore and heroic history woven into the tale. Another new edition is of Charlotte M. Yonge's *The Lances of Lynwood* (Macmillan, $1.75), about the Black Prince, and another edition of Robert Leighton's *Olaf the Glorious* (Macmillan, $1.75), reprinted in time for the thousandth anniversary, next year, of the patron saint of Norway, whose story it is. Another is Stephen W. Meader's pirate story, *The Black Buccaneer* (Harcourt, Brace, $3.50), whose popularity has won for it colored pictures by Meade Schaeffer; and there is yet another format for *The Three Musketeers* (Dodd, Mead, $3.50), with colored illustrations by the same artist.

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Romance comes in at a gallop in the best set of love stories lately assembled, *Love Comes Riding,* collected by Helen Ferris (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50) from an uncommonly broad field, foreign and domestic, old and contemporary, but in the main from the life of today. Their literary merit is high and their influence good, for there is a lift to the spirit in every one. Girls must have this sort of reading matter. I once stopped in a shop on Fourteenth Street on my way home from a publishing house, and the scrubby little girl who waited on me looked with such respect at my armful of review copies that I asked her what she liked to read. "I guess you know what I like best," said she in a manner so apologetic it was quite hangdog. "*Ro*-mance." "I should hope so," I replied briskly. "That's your business at your time of life, and"—grasping at her vocabulary to make sure it got over—"don't you let 'em tell you different," and marched off, leaving her clearly doubtful that anyone giving such unprecedented advice could be quite proper, however thoroughly she had been anticipating it. "*Ro*-mance" girls will read, and if they are not provided with the right kind they will find plenty of muck masquerading as love stories in magazines and newspapers that cannot be kept at arm's length.

Girls' books present romance under many aspects and in all corners of the world. *The Luck of Glenlorn,* by Edith Ballinger Price (Century, $1.75), in Scotland; *Virginia's Bandit,* by Elsie Singmaster (Houghton Mifflin, $1.50), and her *You Make Your Own Luck* (Longmans, Green, $2.00), in the author's favorite region around Gettysburg; *Chestnut Court,* by Mabel Tyrrell (Harpers, $2.00), in an ancient courtyard slumbering in present-day Paris; *The Girl of the Mesa,* by Mae Foster Jay (Wilde, $1.75), in the cliff country of the Southwest; *The Commodore,* by Charles G. Muller (Harpers, $2.00) and *The Other Crowd,* by Mabel Pierce Ashley (Harcourt, Brace, $1.75), in summer resorts popular with the younger set; *The Gallant Lallanes,* by Louise Guyol (Harpers, $2.00), in Louisiana, where a family loses its money and earns it back; *Midge,* by May Frances Shuford (Appleton, $1.75), in a rollicking Georgia boarding-school; *Timber Line,* by Alida Sims Malkus (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50), on a Rocky Mountain forest reserve; *Sally in South Africa,* by Gulielma Orr and Henriette Schiele (Century, $1.75), in a combination of jewel-mystery and travel-information. *Carmella Commands,* the admirable Harper-American Girl prize-story by Walter S. Ball (Harpers, $2.00), steps out of the romance category; it is a record of American life in one of its most piquant and inspiring aspects —the undertaking of Americanization by young foreigners. Not that this describes the book completely—but then, this book should be read rather than described.

Boys have the usual good assortment of romantic adventure, such as *Moccasin Trail,* by Reed Fulton (Doubleday, Doran, $1.75), a sixteen-year-old grappling with the perils of the Santa Fé Trail, and holding a young reader's attention riveted to danger. *The Children of the Cave,* by E. H. Thompson (Marshall Jones, $2.00), is about the narrow escapes of three young Americans in the course of hiding from a Mexican uprising in the cave country of Yucatan; it is based on long experience in this country. *The Treasure of the Château,* by Clifton Lisle (Harcourt, Brace, $2.00), is in the battlefield country of France today. I make no effort to disengage fact from fiction in choosing adventure books for boys to read; Doubleday, Doran has a stock of "True Adventures" as exciting as anything that could be made up—*Knights of the Air* ($2.00), for instance, by Lieutenant Lester Maitland, a history of famous flights and personal sketches of famous aviators. This is a subject on which boys are very well informed and in consequence justly critical. I am glad to be able therefore to recommend, besides this book, an excellent history of aviation by Eric Hodgins and E. Alexander Magoun, *Sky High* (Little, Brown, $2.50).

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Sky High is quite good enough for an expert to enjoy, and parents would perhaps be surprised to know how many boys could qualify as experts on this type of literature. There is a smaller history of aviation dealing more with types of machines, *The Book of Airplanes,* by Lieutenant-Commander Iseman and G. G. Jackson (Oxford, $1.00), that may be confidently taken. A grown-up flying book that I would like to see in juvenile collections is Sir Philip Sassoon's *The Third Route* (Doubleday, Doran, $3.00), the story of his seventeen-thousand-mile trip with the plane, mapping out the route from England through India. There is far more than air-travel in this book—archæology, for instance, side-lights on the story of civilization, and most remarkable pictures, one of which shows the Great Pyramid looking exactly like a hole in the ground.

There is a type of adventure story immensely popular with the teens, the mystery not involving murder, which must meet some need of this particular age, for it is consumed with the utmost avidity. It is not fair to compare such books with Gaboriau or *The Greene Murder Case,* for by the time one is reading these the taste for the milder mysteries has quite gone, but readers interested in such stories should be told that *Cockatoo,* by Gladys Hasty Carroll (Macmillan, $2.00), *The Poindexter Pride,* by Gladys Blake (Appleton, $1.75), *Juniper Green,* by Mary W. Keyes (Longmans, Green, $2.50), and *The Mystery at Star-C Ranch,* by Hildegarde Hawthorne (Appleton, $1.75), are honest light fiction.

For pure romance, however, one of the best books comes from long ago. Eunice Tietjens has lovingly disentangled the story of one of the world's beloved heroes from the mass of Arabian romance, retold it with a poet's skill, and given it to young and old as *The Romance of Antar* (Coward-McCann, $2.50). *Herodotus* (Doubleday, Doran, $2.00) is a selection of the famous stories, edited by Gordon King and illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff, who has quite let himself go in the direction of sly fun. For though it is of course entirely appropriate to provide these faces with "the archaic smile", you can't convince me that the look in the eye of the soldier watching Artemesia sidling forth to war is altogether archaic, or the gestures purely decorative by which Xerxes and his uncle indicate that nothing can be done about the hollowness of life.

Mimpsy Rhys was thirteen when she wrote *Mr. Hermit Crab* (Macmillan, $2.25), the story of a grown-up love-affair; it may perhaps be fairly set before you by my own first experience with it. Miss Seaman gave me the manuscript to read; I carried it about for days, having a rooted dislike for books written by children, and opened it only when there was no other reading matter at hand, on a railway journey that involved changing at New Haven. Two-thirds through the book I was tapped on the shoulder by a guard. "Where do you think you're going, ma'am?" said he. "On my way to New York," I replied. "No you ain't," he said. "You're on the way to the yards at New Haven," and sure enough I was.

I could thus have lost myself in several of the biographies this year offered to the young; this seems to me the department of juvenile literature in which by far the greatest improvement has been made. It would be hard to match Jeannette Eaton's *A Daughter of the Seine* (Harpers, $2.50), the life of Madame Roland, among the grown-up biographies of women of the French Revolution. I emerged from Helen Nicolay's *Andrew Jackson, the Fighting President* (Century, $2.00) with a vivid idea of a strong personality and a turbulent time. Bellamy Partridge's *Amundsen* (Stokes, $2.50), the life-story of a modern Viking, is thrilling, informing, inspiring. There is an excellent *Boy's Life of Kit Carson,* by Flora Warren Seymour (Century, $2.00), and one of William Penn, *The Boy Who Dared,* by Mary H. Wade (Appleton, $1.75).

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No list like this can afford to leave out the books that stand on their informative rather than their literary value, the books about making and doing—especially when they sail in under convoy of one of the most magnificent volumes of the year for younger readers, one with literary merit as well—*The Goldsmith of Florence,* by Katharine Gibson of the Cleveland Art Museum (Macmillan, $5.00). This is a Junior Literary Guild book, a selection that made me go back over the list of its choices and realize with what excellent judgment they have been made. *The Goldsmith of Florence* is about old-time crafts and craftsmen, stories such as are told every day at the children's classes at this model civic museum; the illustrations are on a scale little short of sumptuous. Of the manuals at moderate price one may point out in particular *Patty Pans,* by Florence La Ganke (Little, Brown, $1.75), a simple but entirely adequate cook-book that puts in all the directions other such guides are unwise enough to leave out; *Jack Knife Cookery,* by James A. Wilder (Dutton, $2.50), which reduces this science to the demands and equipment of a desert island and manages to produce good food notwithstanding; *Marionettes,* by Edith Flack Ackley (Stokes, $2.50), a very easy book; *Cork Ships and How to Make Them,* and its successor *Clipper Ships Done in Cork Models,* by Peter Adams (Dutton, $1.25 each) which make accurate and sailable boats at no expense whatsoever; *Things Any Boy Can Make,* by Joseph Leeming (Century, $2.00), which reminds me of the things we used to construct with ecstasy out of the directions in *Harper's Young People;* and *Singing Time,* by Satis Coleman and Alice Thorn (John Day, $2.50), a book of very short, very easy songs for school or home use.

The parcel post has several times disorganized this list by bringing in books that upon inspection had to be included. No doubt before this reaches print it will have brought me others that I will passionately wish I had included. But further readjustments must be made by the friend of youth who, like me, is interested in bringing the right book and the right reader together. He will make his own additions, and I am happy to say that he has this year a wide range of selection. Books for boys and girls are surely getting more noticeable, take them all in all, and they are certainly being given to us in more beautiful and distinctive dress. All that the heads of juvenile departments can do to justify the existence of this latest and most attractive profession for women is being done; competition among them is brisk, but it is also generous. I look for a steady improvement along all lines.

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FICTION

SKETCH OF A SINNER *by Frank Swinnerton* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

THE "Sketch" of Mr. Swinnerton's title is modest to a fault. The book amounts to a real portrait of Lydia Rowe in the three principle relationships of her married life. We are, in fact, made to know her with unusual thoroughness; first as the young wife of an elderly, ironic, jealous, somewhat musty dealer in antiques; then as the compassionate friend of a disinherited and morbidly sensitive youth who loves her to distraction; presently as the intending mistress of an enigmatic widower for whom she runs away from her husband (a motor-car kills this lover before her eyes at the instant of her joining him); and finally in the hour of her return to the husband who, stricken helpless with paralysis, never knows where she has been. Throughout this emotional cycle we are made to comprehend Lydia as she is in and to herself.

The result is, indeed, more a character portrait than a novel. Unfortunately, we view the other involved persons through the same restricted window—that is, as Lydia sees them. Being darkly inscrutable to her, they remain almost entirely so to us. *Sketch of a Sinner* remains, then, a mutilated affair so far as our knowledge of its whole relationships is concerned. We comprehend what each of three beings means to Lydia; but we are given hardly a clue to what she means to any one of them. And the most important of the three, her lover Gerard, is the most inscrutable of all. It is a sheer impossibility to make out, from any data that seep through Lydia's perceptions on to the page, whether his love is serious or frivolous, experimental or enduring, or even what manner of man he is. The crucial action of the book thus takes place without the reader's having the faintest clue to whether Lydia has abandoned herself to a disastrous folly or a sublime fulfilment. Mr. Swinnerton would perhaps say that herein his book is true to the chances of our poor human existence and to the tragic limitations of our consciousness. That is one view of the matter. Another is that if the art of fiction can disclose nothing but what everyday living does, we may as well be content with the mere spectacle afforded by the lives about us, and observe our novels instead of bothering to read them.

THE RETURN OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *by Hugh Kingsmill* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.50)

THE REAL purpose of this piece of ostensible fiction is to present some biographical speculations about Shakespeare based on internal evidence in the plays and poems. Of these speculations a respectable nucleus is of more than ordinary interest, originality and suggestiveness. Reduced to one straightforward article or, at the most, a small brochure, Mr. Kingsmill's interpretation would make some stir among Shakespearean scholars and perhaps claim a lasting place on the critical shelf. Unfortunately, the author has taken all of his idea that makes sense and sewed it up in sailcloth and weighted it with lead and thrown it overboard. His method of accomplishing this sea-burial is to invent a piece of hocus-pocus about a scientist who finds a way to resurrect dead personages at one predetermined stage of their former existences. A being appears who is palmed off on the

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reader as the "reintegrated" Shakespeare of early 1607; and this being (who, by the way, never precisely admits his identity) spends most of pp. 135-271, out of the 320-page novel, discoursing with authority about Shakespeare to a modern critic who disputes most of what the pseudo-Shakespeare tells him. In this conversation the book discloses whatever of consequence was in the author's mind. The rest is devoted to the extravaganza of Shakespeare's reappearance and exploitation. All this, besides being in itself the most lubberly of extravaganzas, is a thoroughly efficient device for ruining the author's credit with readers who might otherwise value his interpretative criticism. Never was a clearer case of insulting the small natural audience of a book by a vapid attempt to reach a vast audience with material hopelessly unadapted to it. First the form kills the ready-made interest of a thousand good readers; then the substance clamors for the yawns of ten thousand bad ones.

WILSON FOLLETT

MONKS ARE MONKS: A DIAGNOSTIC SCHERZO *by George Jean Nathan* (KNOPF. $2.50)

MR. NATHAN, of the firm of Mencken and Nathan, is again up to a little mystification—a most transparent one. *Monks Are Monks* is a comedy of masks. With the exception of Lorinda Hope every character in the book is Nathan with a mask on, for even Mr. Mencken himself, under the *nom de guerre* of Morton, talks suspiciously like the junior member of the team. As for Lorinda Hope—she is a leaf out of Carl Van Vechten. In short, Mr. Nathan, for all his insistence that criticism can be a creative art, is not a creative artist. Wriggle as hard as he is able, he remains just George Jean Nathan—for which most of us are thankful. America has enough creative artists creating dull and dismal people, and whatever Mr. Nathan is he is never dull or dismal. He may be vulgar and a playboy, his lôve for aristocracy may often have the aggressiveness of the parvenu, he often lacks taste, he is bumptious—but he is alive. He may not be able to create human beings, but he can stimulate them; for God—or, as many a player and playwright will assert, the Devil—created Mr. Nathan apparently, for this purpose.

Mr. Nathan has common-sense and courage, and he has them in superlative degree—and common-sense and courage are just what the American theatre both needs and lacks. Mr. Nathan is never an echo, and despite his cap and bells and custard-pies, his ideas are not projected for mere effect. The effect, the affectation if you will, lies solely in his manner. The matter, gist of what he has to say, is as sincerely and as soundly thought out as the work of any living critic of the theatre,—it is modern, keen, authentic dramatic evaluation. Read, for instance, what Whitney Varick Nathan says in *Monks Are Monks* about George Bernard Shaw:

> The plays of Shaw, all of them, age badly. The one and only thing that today seems fresh and vital about them and will probably still seem fresh and vital in future years is their love element, that is, their sentimental passages and their love scenes.

Here is a judgment which is startling enough and true enough to arouse shrieks of protest from all Shavians. Shaw the intellectual, declares Mr. Varick Nathan, will in a hundred years be as dead as Rowe or Nathaniel P. Willis; it is only the sentimentalist who will survive! For the courage to utter such judgments as these we pray for more George Jean Nathans! For them we can forgive his pretentiousness in his display of learning, his snobbishness, his vulgarity. And perhaps, after all, it was necessary for him to don these things in order to draw the attention of *Boobus Americanus,* of which the finest flower may not, after all, be named Babbitt.

GRENVILLE VERNON

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SINCERITY, A STORY OF OUR TIME *by John Erskine* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.50)

JOHN ERSKINE, after Homer the chronicler of Helen of Troy, has forsaken in his latest novel the private lives of the ancients to investigate those of certain moderns. He calls his novel *Sincerity,* and he is concerned with this vaunted contemporary virtue as it affects the relations between men and women, particularly between men and women who happen to be satisfactorily married. He adopts and extends the theme of Ibsen's *A Doll's House,* and applies it both to men and to women; and he invents, in order to demonstrate it, an extraordinary and not very convincing domestic entanglement.

Isabel Beauvel, a happily-married and successful novelist, writes an essay upon marriage. She maintains in it that happily-married persons are not nearly so happy as they appear, or even as they think themselves to be. The happy wife resents the ignorance which her sheltering contentment, by cutting her off from half the experience of life, forces upon her. And her husband too suffers from the unintended limitations of a happy home. If he is tempted to live a little more widely and explore the mysteries of existence, he usually suppresses the impulse out of love for his wife and broods over it in silence. Isabel publishes her essay under the name of Nora Helmer, and is astonished by the response from persons of both sexes who cannot confide to their too-contented mates the existence of their vague unrest. Most surprisingly, she receives a letter from her own husband, sympathizing with the views expressed in her essay and asking for an opportunity to meet Nora Helmer. Unwilling to confess her harmless deception, Isabel allows her dearest friend, Mary Allerton, to impersonate Nora Helmer and to interview Winthrop.

After a few weeks of agonized continuation of the hoax, during which all three would gladly have withdrawn had they been able to do so, Mary and Winthrop embark upon an affair of their own and Isabel departs for Europe in search of the experiences from which her home had sheltered her. Mr. Erskine never succeeds very well in clarifying the psychological processes which lead his characters into their extraordinary conduct. Consequently, the reader is not surprised when, after ten years during which Mary and Winthrop have lived together as husband and wife, Isabel unreasonably reappears and resumes her position as mistress of Winthrop's house. The only appreciable result of the experiment, after the characters had abandoned the attempt at complete sincerity, was the conclusion that, however difficult it may be in this world to be logical, to be at once logical and just is an impossibility. Mr. Erskine is graceful and witty as usual, but the total effect of *Sincerity* is somewhat flat. It is difficult for the reader to regard Winthrop and Isabel as anything other than faintly animated premises in Mr. Erskine's syllogism, and the logic of the syllogism itself is often exceedingly elusive.

MARGARET WALLACE

TOWER OF SAND *by Wilbur Daniel Steele* (HARPERS. $2.50)

Too much excellence is a dangerous thing and Mr. Steele, after the continued approval of the O. Henry Award and of Edward J. O'Brien, may find it his undoing. In his latest volume of short stories, what one takes at first for genius seems on second thought to be merely a trick of writing. For the title story and some of the others are melodramatic and highly colored, ending with a sudden unconvincing twist.

But it is competent writing and excellent reading. And it will always insure Mr. Steele an enthusiastic public. The quiet subtle stories, however, convince one that the author could be more versatile. It is in this genre that he has his greatest success and failure. One of these, "A Life", the story of a defeated racing-boat that is cursed with fail-

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ure, is marred by sentimentality and lack of any real characterization. But the last one in the book, "Never Anything That Fades", the story of a woman who loathes the fading things in life and a man who desires loyalty and faith, is a superb effort and is as unforgettable as the famous "Bubbles". In another story, "For Where Is Your Fortune Now?", a mere sketch of a situation and personalities, Mr. Steele does a most difficult thing with apparent lack of effort.

All in all, the book is a successful combination of several types. And his machine-made stories are so much better than those of other men that one is captious enough to censure them only because some of his work approaches literature.

THE MAN WITHIN *by Graham Greene* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

RARELY does a young author in his first novel produce such a satisfying work as this is. Nor does a young man usually attempt such a difficult problem. The book is dramatic, even thrilling, but it is almost entirely a psychological drama.

Andrews, a coward and a weakling, buffeted by circumstances and twisted by a sense of his own inferiority, betrays his comrades, fails the woman he loves, and ruins his whole life. But throughout all he has spurts of most unusual bravery and, at the end, he is almost heroic. Yet the novel is not merely the "case history" of an abnormal. The reader follows it with sympathy and understanding. So vividly is the story told that it has the inevitability one associates with *Lord Jim*. Every phase is well motivated and the end is convincing.

Mr. Greene's style is warm and glowing. His descriptions of the English countryside are very real and very alluring. A sense of values and a feeling for words keep him from sentimentality. The plot, given a bit at a time through the hero's mind, is adroitly handled.

The romantic novel, usually the result of more emotion than thought, is quite rightly an object of suspicion today. But Mr. Greene with something definite to say and an unusual character to develop, has written a modern psychological novel with feeling and much skill. This explains the chorus of praise from British critics and the book's sensational sales here and abroad.

PAUL ALLEN

LOOK HOMEWARD, ANGEL *by Thomas Wolfe* (SCRIBNER'S. $2.50)

AMONG young American writers who have made impressive débuts in recent years Thomas Wolfe is a distinct anomaly: he has not a nostalgic temperament. *Look Homeward, Angel* is not the book of a frayed spirit who is trying his level best to escape through elegiac writing; it is a rich, positive grappling with life, a remembrance of things past untinged by the shadow of regret, of one who has found his youthful experiences full of savor. No more sensuous (not to be construed as sensual) novel has been written in the United States. There is an easy, unforced strength to it that should be the despair of those beginners of the *New American Caravan* who have tossed overboard one genteel tradition only to fall into another. Inasmuch as it is not a novelist's novel, there will be quite intelligent devotees of fiction who will find its rough, fluid pattern too easy for their tastes. The answer to them would be that it is unfair to condemn a good chronicle novel simply because the chronicle, through overemphasis, is now falling out of fashion.

For a good chronicle novel is precisely what *Look Homeward, Angel* is. The story is a familiar one: the life of a family set down as it progresses in time, with particular attention to one member who serves as a focal point. The Gants are middle-class people, living in a resort town in the southern mountains that is called Altamount, but which is probably Asheville, N. C. Eugene Gant is

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born at the opening of the century, and his experiences have probably been matched by any number of our contemporaries. But Mr. Wolfe writes of Eugene's days with a difference. The sensitivity of the book is enormous, and it is not a sick sensitivity. There is either gusto or intensity to all of Eugene's activities; his fighting as a boy with the poor whites; his taste for foods; his mooning over the heroines of cheap American fiction (which recalls Joyce's Stephen Dedalus and his boyish maundering over Mercedes of the Dumas novel); and his relations with brothers and sisters, father and mother. His friendship with his elder brother Ben is particularly well set forth.

Mr. Wolfe's grasp of character is unhurried—a firm grasp in the old Thackeray sense. His people are "flat"; they are tagged by their idiosyncracies of speech and action. They do not change greatly (old Gant always dissipates his energy, and Eliza, the mother, is a hoarder no matter what comes), but because they are the sort of people who are set in their ways (excepting Eugene) the imputation of flatness is no derogation. As for Mr. Wolfe's sheer dramatic power, we ask you to read the death of Ben and then compare it, as we did, with the death of Madame Bovary. Mr. Wolfe's scene is more intimate, it brings a sharper emotion of recognition to one who has been through such a ghastly ordeal. We do not say that it is greater artistically; we merely submit that it is substantially richer.

Look Homeward, Angel has its faults, but they are not those springing from a poverty of material. We might point out that a more logical effect would have been gained if Ben's adventure in the Greasy Spoon (which sets fineness against vulgarity in the manner of the Walpurgisnacht of *Ulysses*) had been left open somehow to the observation of Eugene, or if Gant's trip to California had been assimilated in some way to the narrative of Eugene's life. There are sentences that debouch here and there into meaningless rhetoric. But why seek flaws in the midst of abundance? Mr. Wolfe gives the impression of being inexhaustible, even though the book is largely autobiographical. His second novel will be his real test; for in it he will be forced to think more in terms of pattern and idea than he has in his first. But his observance is so inclusive, his antennae so sensitive to the world about him, that one can hardly regard *Look Homeward, Angel* as a flash in the pan.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

FIVE AND TEN *by Fannie Hurst* (HARPERS. $2.50)

WITH *Five and Ten,* Fannie Hurst comes back to her always waiting public with a penetrating, vigorous, contemporary portrait, a study of a tragically, almost pitifully, rich man. It has all the touch-and-go keenness, the brilliance, the "short-hand" of revealing oblique words, that we expect of her. It has also her really deep perception—so consistent and deep that we never fail to be surprised—and her most genuine and permanent quality: the ability to invest human relationships with poignance.

It is a most contemporary piece of writing. Its subject, first; its peculiar dots-and-dashes style; its bursts of exaggerated directness and broad implication turning suddenly to reticence, belong to the people of the book, who live and move in the top rhythm of contemporary hysteria.

It is the story of "Five and Ten" Rarick—John G. Rarick whose reorganization of a failing business makes him a fortune of dimes. It is a success that he himself cannot realize. He uses it, manipulates it, and it is this success that brings about his inevitable failure. The little man whose pained thin face, sunk in his shoulders, seems to his wife like the face of a hunch-back, "forever looking up at a taller world", tries to resist the trend of his fate; but he moves with it, and his family moves, too. They are caught, not by a tide, not by the flow of a cataract, but

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by something more ironical—something more like a runaway escalator. They pass all the landings but there's no stepping off.

Jenny Avery, wife of Rarick, whose little patrimony of about twenty-five hundred dollars both started his business and put up an impassable barrier between husband and wife, is a fine piece of drawing. The brittle, frigid, red-haired thin woman strains always with wanting—wanting a proper house, wanting jewels, wanting the social success that she always just misses, wanting, at the last, a coffin lined with silver ailanthus leaves. A primitive mother, she has both a hysterical, indulgent over-fondness for her two children and a savage desire for their advantage.

There is the son Avery, whose every effort to break through to contact with the others is thwarted. Interpreted by his indulgent mother, his wish to understand his life always takes the form of a need for a new car or yacht. Jennifer, the daughter of the house, understands—almost too well—the futility and the direction of their course. All of their efforts to become articulate to one another go awry. Though this element may be —no doubt is—overdeveloped at some cost to the book's proportion, some of Miss Hurst's best writing is in those scenes wherein these four isolated people try vainly to get within spiritual earshot of each other.

Avery, at seventeen, kills himself. Brittle Jenny, after many trials of having her cake and eating it—dies sick and frightened. To Jennifer, clever, self-contemptuous, comes the disillusionment of the thwarted idealist, but she achieves enough character to save her from complete disaster. Rarick stands alone at last in the isolation of noble, heroic honesty and philosophical poise.

It is a book that will be liked. Miss Hurst will probably add new friends to an already large following. It is a book, too, that everyone will find interesting for the real distinction of the central characterization and the forthrightness of the telling.

ISADORA BENNETT

THE ROBBER BAND, *by Leonhard Frank* (CAPE & SMITH. $2.50)

THIS BOOK is definitely one of those usually described as "promising", and in this particular case the description may be applied in a double sense. The original publication of *The Robber Band* in Germany before the War was, no doubt, regarded as the promise of a new talent in fiction. Its publication here may, presumably, be taken as a promise of the translation of the author's later and better work. Leonhard Frank is not, I think, one of the most interesting writers of his generation, and his powers are hardly shown to best advantage in this book written in his youth. But it does reveal a genuine talent for picturesque narrative, an ability to create odd characters and handle rather extraordinary situations. Its style is very pleasing, being at once smooth, easy and straightforward.

The Robber Band is the story of a group of boys who take the title for their secret society from Schiller's romantic play, *The Robbers*. At the same time, disdaining literary consistency, they adopt, and call each other by, the names of the heroes of certain Wild West stories. They plan a hare-brained expedition to America, but before they can attempt it the Band is broken up by the development of their individual interests during adolescence. The book follows, thereafter, the youthful experiences of the various members with their occasional meetings and reunions. In particular, it follows the story of Old Hammer-fist, who becomes a painter and who, in his artistic growing-pains, has some experiences that strike us as more spiritualistic than (as they are intended to be) spiritual. At any rate, the rather Faustian "Stranger" who represents Old Hammer-fist's "other self" is not, in the rôle of a flesh-and-blood character, very convincing. There are some brilliant passages in the book, but over the whole story is an atmosphere of very German, almost medieval, romance.

CLINTON SIMPSON

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BIOGRAPHY

HANNA *by Thomas Beer* (KNOPF. $4.00)

IF THERE were a corporate being called the American Writer of Today, Mr. Thomas Beer would serve very well as the Memory of this creature. For us all, he remembers the social history of America from 1865 to 1900. Sponge-like, he is soaking up, before it is too late, all the information and gossip that survivors can contribute about the Gilded Age and the Mauve Decade. Fortunately, he not only absorbs: he expresses. The sponge being squeezed has yielded a flow of colored language. The language forms into books that are entertaining in spite of being irritating, books that are notable as feats of Memory.

The latest is a biography of Mark Hanna. It has been often observed that while Mr. Beer excels in creating backgrounds against which his heroes are to pass, he is usually weak in his portraiture of the heroes themselves. Beneath the elaborate painting, he has not yet given convincing sign of a talent for the psychological diagnosis of individuals. But with Hanna he manages better than he did with Stephen Crane—perhaps because of the greater simplicity of the Senator's character.

In Mr. Beer's view, "Mark Hanna was formidable; he stood talking of costs and labor and convenience, the foreman of an age. Machinery spoke; the blue prints of engineers and the coal in bunkers found a voice here. A monstrous, docile power made itself heard". There is no doubt that Mr. Beer has contributed an important volume to the literature about American politics from Lincoln's death to the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, and there appears not the slightest danger that this contribution will escape the eyes of either the experts or the public that reads literature.

But while congratulating ourselves on the possession of so well-adorned a Memory of our past as Mr. Beer, it would be a pity if we were also completely satisfied with his prose in its present state. Mr. Beer gives the impression always of having *almost* mastered his style. In his next book he will subdue it, we say, and the next book arrives, and again Mr. Beer is at intervals mounting stilts and walking off from his reader and afterwards compensating for the labored fine writing by "writing rough" for a page or two. I suspect that the trouble with Mr. Beer's style and biographical method is that a great deal of his composing is built simply upon an avoidance of the natural expression or procedure. Does he find himself about to write "five years"? He checks himself and puts down "sixty months" instead. That is, often his artificialities have not a positive sanction for their existence but a negative reason, the eschewing of the vernacular expression. The reader is bound to suspect that Mr. Beer's method is just a bag of tricks. It is not; but one has to finish his books before one finds out that his devices are really essential to his themes. As a stylist he will succeed when he secures the reader's perfect trust in what he is doing. Let us make one more wish for the future studies by Mr. Beer, and that is that their author will learn to keep himself out of the way when the reader needs to look at his subject, and that he will put himself squarely behind his theme. He will have to curtail some of his posturing, but he will gain in power, and make us feel him as a force as well as appreciate him as a Memory.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

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THE LIFE AND STRANGE AND SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF DANIEL DE FOE *by Paul Dottin* (MACAULAY. $3.50)

M. PAUL DOTTIN has written a painstaking and scholarly biography of Daniel De Foe which competes favorably, in point of interest, with many biographic works more popular in intention. Indeed, it would have been difficult to render this story dull and lifeless. De Foe's career was so spectacular, so packed with incident, so varied and colored by chance and mischance, that every circumstance of it may be minutely investigated and every fact conscientiously set forth, without weighting the story. Thus, M. Dottin's work has a duplicate virtue which is rare in modern biography, or, for that matter, in any biography—it combines with the fascination of a swift and entertaining narrative the comfortable savor of authenticity.

The son of a Dissenting butcher by the name of James Foe, Daniel early displayed a preoccupation with trade which augured ill for his share in the future of English literature. He apprenticed himself to a wine merchant in Cornhill, and, at the close of his apprenticeship, travelled about England and the Continent on his own responsibility, dealing cleverly but somewhat too optimistically in whatever offered. It was his desire to improve his station by affecting a gentlemanly interest in letters, and his stout Puritan upbringing precipitated him into the ranks of the contemporary journalists. Under the reign of James II he allied himself with the persecuted Dissenters, and disclosed a capacity for oratory and pamphleteering which whetted his ambition. He rejoiced immoderately at the accession of William of Orange and, attaching an aristocratic prefix to his name, came out into the open to claim the credit due so demonstratively loyal a subject.

His over-confidence, indeed, landed him in bankruptcy, but the ministry of King William discovered a use for his facile pen. He found himself editor of a prominent review subsidized by the party in power. By the application of business methods to the pursuit of letters, De Foe developed something approximating modern journalism. He was never long out of trouble, financial or political, for he could restrain neither his passion for speculation nor his propensity for biting satire. Notwithstanding his vigorous and almost tearful protests, he was on one occasion imprisoned at Newgate and pilloried before the Royal Exchange. His political missions as propagandist, as spy and informer, kept him constantly and often dangerously involved in public affairs. The great novels, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders,* and some dozen others less well known, came almost as journalistic by-products of one of the busiest and most harassed lives in the history of English literature.

M. Dottin's evident conviction that, if everything possible to know about a man is ferreted out and faithfully set down, his character cannot fail to appear, is magnificently justified. This biography is a work of considerable general interest and of undeniable value to the permanent literature of the subject. Not the least important part of it is the careful and exhaustive bibliography, an elaboration and revision of the research of W. P. Trent. The extent of the task may be realized when it is recalled that there are more than three hundred and fifty items listed, and that De Foe habitually sought the cover of anonymity for his political writings. Louise Ragan has given M. Dottin's work the benefit of an able and spirited translation.

BOLIVAR, THE PASSIONATE WARRIOR *by T. R. Ybarra* (WASHBURN. $4.00)

HERE is a biography of faintly archaic flavor. Señor Ybarra, himself a Venezuelan and the descendant of one of Bolivar's ranking generals, has written of the Liberator of South America as only an ardent hero-worshiper could write. His reverence for Bolivar, which is expressed in oratorical phraseology and

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florid metaphor, is unusual in modern biography and likely to be displeasing to modern readers. Yet it has, nevertheless, a certain suitability. Simon Bolivar was himself so fiery and dramatic a figure, with a love of impressive phrases and fine gestures so thoroughly Latin-American, that his story would have lost much of its flavor in a cooler idiom.

Probably no more romantic personage has been bred upon either American Continent than the reckless young sprig of Venezuelan nobility whom his compatriots adore as *the* Liberator. A rich and titled young Colonial from Caracas, he was sent to Madrid in the early nineteenth century to complete his education. He lived a riotous and extravagant life, spread the fame of his amours abroad, and was received by the Queen in circumstances both conventional and unconventional. Because the Queen suspected that he had on his person a clue to the disaffection of her favorite, Bolivar suffered an ignominious search at the hands of a police officer. The incident was galling to his inordinate pride and strengthened his native dislike of Spanish tyranny. Bolivar married at nineteen a girl whom he loved with a flaming passion, and was a widower at twenty. When he was just twenty-two, on the crest of the Aventine Hill in Rome, he swore never to rest until South America was freed from Spain.

This oath, and the unsupported determination of the fiery and bereaved young man, plunged Venezuela and New Granada into twenty years of bitter and bloody warfare. Bolivar's magnificent battles, whose mere names are unknown to most North American readers, have been woven by Ybarra into a stirring narrative. But Ybarra finds more in his hero than the hot-headed partisan of South American liberties, than even the shrewd general and inspired warrior who led his tattered armies over the impassable Andes, who outwitted and out-fought the seasoned soldiery of Spain. The Bolivar whom Ybarra reveres was a thoughtful and imaginative statesman, who foresaw the destiny of South America and planned carefully and lovingly to fulfil it, who dreamed majestically of a great republican union which should include the whole continent of South America, and who gave his life to his dream, the man who succeeded in freeing four countries and founding a fifth, yet who died in exile, under an alien roof, clad in a borrowed nightshirt.

MARGARET WALLACE.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË: A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY *by Rosamond Langbridge* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

WHATEVER its ultimate value may be, this psychological study of Charlotte Brontë offers a point for discussion in connection with the form and limitations of the "new" biography. Miss Langbridge writes with a slashing scorn of those who refuse to chase the quarry of implication into every last burrow and cranny of personality; she derides Mrs. Gaskell, the first biographer of Charlotte; and she is dead certain on points that have been construed differently by others. (She thinks the Brontë children suffered through being educated on Shakespeare and the eighteenth-century poets instead of being allowed to play with dolls; while the Abbé Dimnet thinks it very lucky that the three girls escaped "the insipidities" that are "the coloured bonbons of the mind".) Her biography has a swiftness of tempo that makes Mrs. Gaskell's momentum seem something akin to the flowing of cold treacle; and she is as shrewd as the facts would seem to warrant.

And yet Miss Langbridge's book is not so indispensable as the scorn with which it is written would seem to imply. Not that Miss Langbridge is not right upon the counts that may be brought against all the Brontës. Any sane person in 1929 would be perfectly willing to concede that the religion of Patrick Brontë and Charlotte was a cold, life-denying sort of faith; that Charlotte's ideas about love have long since been riddled; that she was a repressed rebel; that her friend, Mary Taylor,

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was right when she said of the Gaskell biography: "though not so gloomy as the truth", and of Charlotte that her life was a "walking nightmare".

The point is that Miss Langbridge, intelligent in her deductions, candid in expressing them, and refreshing in her attitude towards the problems of modern society in general, has permitted her suppressed fury—fury that women could be allowed to live as Charlotte lived—to get in her way. She can't see the personality for the psychology. The best method of showing the limitations of her biography is to contrast it with the one written some twenty years ago by the Abbé Dimnet and brought up to date by the inclusion in the form of an appendix of the letters written by Charlotte to her Brussels master, M. Héger—letters, incidentally, which were not included in the material that was available to Mrs. Gaskell, and that would seem to prove beyond question that Charlotte had made the fatal mistake of falling in love with a married man who did not care particularly for her. Where Miss Langbridge plunges courageously, the Abbé Dimnet remarks: "Charlotte's subconscious mind, as we catch glimpses of it in her novels and poems, is an ocean upon which one hesitates to venture". Now we don't want to cramp conjecture in biographical writing in general. But the Abbé does dare to venture; he poses his implications, and lets us draw the deductions. His method justifies itself, for virtually every point that is cried up by Miss Langbridge emerges from the Dimnet volume, *and the figures of the three sisters are not obscured.*

Miss Langbridge makes the mistake of writing about the Brontës as if they had had at their command, and had frowned upon, the wisdom of the twentieth century. She blames Charlotte for not knowing about birth control in the 1850's! She fails to take into account that all the sisters were dead some four years before *The Origin of Species* was published; and she cannot see that Calvinism was still logical in the West Riding of the early Victorian years, or that duty might logically be considered an ideal in those times. Her tone lacks charity. Nevertheless, in extenuation, her volume will serve excellently as a commentary upon that of Mrs. Gaskell. Taken as a corrective, it will serve admirably as one facet of such truth as is available about the Brontës.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

THE MAN CHARLES DICKENS *by Edward Wagenknecht* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $4.00)

SENTIMENTAL, egotistic, perennially adolescent, a little coarse but a good fellow, this is the Wagenknecht Dickens. Like many prolific and vital geniuses, he was thoroughly conscious of his own ability. The effect which his emotional life had upon his writing is interesting. He spent his whole life pitying the wretched little boy condemned by a worthless father to paste labels on bottles in a blacking house, and his unsuccessful love affairs confirmed him in his youthful worship of a sugary feminine ideal. The early feeling of inferiority drove him to enjoy acting and to go from acting on to literature. Possessing an infinite capacity for self-pity, he was able to transfer it to the lower half of humanity, and this made him one of the greatest popular novelists of all time.

Mr. Wagenknecht calls his book a "psychography", which seems to mean that instead of chronological treatment, the protagonist is presented in a series of monographs which throw light on various phases of Dickens's character. There is a wealth of documental material, a treasure-house of scholarly fact in this book; it is a pity that it should be marred by rather priggish general observations. One is interested, for instance, to hear that Dickens made faces in the mirror while he wrote, but one yawns through a lecture on temperance.

H. R. HAYS

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ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

NATURE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE *by Edmund Blunden* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $1.25)

NOTES ON ENGLISH VERSE SATIRE *by Humbert Wolfe* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $1.25)

THE LENGTHENING shelf of Hogarth Lectures contains much in that attractive "amateur" vein of English criticism of which we have so little in this country, where writers are born, not educated, and where saturation in the past and a well-bred style may incur the charge of academic dry-rot. Both Mr. Blunden and Mr. Wolfe handle congenial themes with adequate scholarship and infectious relish; the latter's book, partly but not wholly by virtue of its subject-matter, is the more lively and arresting.

Mr. Blunden ranges chiefly through writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His lectures are not the conventional steps to the temple of Wordsworth, of whom, by the way, he remarks: "It is possible sometimes to mistake Wordsworth for the Creator rather than the created, and he has a tendency to give Nature a penny for her amusing prattle and tell her to run along now like a good girl". He has not much to say of the writers whose attitude toward Nature is that of the cat which does not caress you but caresses itself on you. It is the authenticity of Mr. Blunden's own nature-poetry that raises him above a number of piping Georgians, and here he is mainly concerned with reality of observation and expression; he gives more space to Bloomfield and Gilbert White than to anyone else. Such a mode of approach achieves a degree of freshness and some delicate critical *aperçus,* at some cost in the way of general ideas.

"The satirist," Mr. Wolfe begins, "holds a place halfway between the preacher and the wit." He uses the form but not the spirit of poetry, and is great not by what he builds but in what he destroys; "the poet would rather make a world with God than pillage it with Satan". With considerable if not impeccable erudition Mr. Wolfe surveys the chief figures in verse satire from Chaucer to the Sitwells. While he does not alter the map of the country—he is too sensible a traditionalist for that—he makes it alive, and one wants to rush off and instantly reread Skelton and Butler and a dozen more, including Chesterton. Rejoicing in Pope the satirist, Mr. Wolfe deals a sound blow at the current foppish exaltation of Pope the poet. He places the much-lauded conclusion of *The Dunciad* beside Milton's invocation to Light, and here must be quoted some sentences which are not afraid to be beautiful:

> Pope speaks like a lecturer, but Milton is praying. With slow passionate intensity the beautiful words make way for the aspiring thoughts to which even their loveliness is a barrier. It lies not with human speech exactly to express the approach to the inmost and the highest. Here the soul walks alone, for, like death, this communion is solitary. But, as Milton releases his own soul, the shadow of the miracle falls upon ours. We too desperately seek to lay aside the masks of language, and haltingly share, after the dark adventure down, the reascent. We cannot see the invisible upon which Milton is gazing, but we observe beating about him the brightness that veiled the face of Moses returning from Sinai. It is as near as we may come to the source of light. He who brings us so far, and he alone, is at the heart of poetry.

No reader of Mr. Wolfe's poetry needs to be told that he has fire in his belly, and the

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indignation which makes many of his verses is not absent from his prose. His book abounds in brisk phrases, especially toward the end, for Mr. Wolfe has not yet forgiven the Victorians. Although Ruskin went so far as to commend Edward Lear it was "with the air of God commending a may-fly"; (without laying claim to greater virtue than Ruskin or God, I can't find much in Lear myself). Of the famous attack on Swinburne Mr. Wolfe says: "Mr. Morley was commissioned to extinguish Mount Etna with an anonymous squirt. Unhappily his soul, like the body of Empedocles, fell in during the rite, but it did not matter because neither he nor his generation noticed the loss". The critic is not insipid.

A NEW APPROACH TO POETRY *by Elsa Chapin and Russell Thomas* (UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS. $2.00)

A BOOK about poetry that is full of charts is likely to remind one of the scales set up in Hades to weigh the verses of Æschylus and Euripides, and this work has its share of pedagogical fripperies. But, while the high hopes of the title and preface are scarcely fulfilled, the discussion of the elements of rhythm and metre, and some general remarks (truisms and all), may be quite valuable for high-school students and teachers and college freshmen. The business of underlining color epithets with variously colored crayons, as an aid to the visual imagination, may perhaps be left to the nursery schools. Every teacher can sympathize with the authors' consciousness of the difficulties of "teaching" poetry, and with any effort to overcome them; but over-explaining is another matter. If children's responsiveness to Brooke's "The Great Lover" has to be quickened by a five-column chart of sense images, is their appreciation of that poem and of Frost's "Birches" still further deepened by the conclusion "that the sense appeal of *touch* can exist in three ways: as thermal, as tactual, and as kinæsthetic"? If this is the new approach to poetry one may be content with older ways, and with more reliance upon the grace of God.

DOUGLAS BUSH

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A VARIED SHELF

TWELVE AGAINST THE GODS: THE STORY OF ADVENTURE *by William Bolitho* (SIMON & SCHUSTER. $4.00)

I AM enough of an admirer of Mr. Bolitho's work to be distressed by the ballyhoo about it. This is not intelligent of me because indifference, not opposition, to publicity is what we ought to cultivate and we ought to be as able to like an over-praised book as to like, or dislike, a neglected one. I suppose what I dislike most is calling him "the incomparable Bolitho" and my dislike must be divided into two parts: first my feeling that the adjective, with its implications, is completely inappropriate; and second my complete incapacity to justify my feeling.

Bolitho is a manipulator of ideas. He has, also, an immense appetite for information, facts, curiosities, and the movements of the human spirit; but it is impossible for him to isolate anything. He has arrived at that stage of civilization where men see the connection between events, the relationship becoming more significant than the separate facts. If he had chosen, instead of twelve adventurers, twelve bankers or twelve criminals, he would still have written the same thing; and what he tells us about the spirit of adventure in this book is less interesting than what he tells us about immortality and heroism and democracy and morals—about the small series of worries which we call life.

The guard and the search, says Bolitho, are the two efforts which make civilization, and the adventurer, the searcher, often becomes a guardian at a certain point in his career: "it is when the pirates count their booty that they become mere thieves". And "the greatest adventurer that ever lived ended as a nervous, banal millionaire". The force of custom and of law, against which the adventurer struggles, can do one of two things: crush the outlaw or, when he is sufficiently successful, embrace him. The crushing process is sometimes so sweet and gentle that the victim imagines himself at the height of his conquest.

It seems to me that most of Bolitho's chosen examples—Casanova, Cagliostro, Lola Montez, Napoleon (the first and the third), and Isadora Duncan—were predestined to adventure and that their times encouraged them. Bolitho rejects the Chestertonian ideal of adventure: roughly that a subway train might go to any station on the line, but the fact that it actually comes to Times Square, where it always intended to come, is sublimely thrilling. He notes also that the Atlantic fliers and mountain climbers of to-day are the soldiers of society, not adventurers against it. And that suggests that he has omitted a type of adventure to which his energetic mind ought to devote itself, the adventure of Gauguin. For Gauguin is one of the few men who broke the mold of their lives. If he was predestined for painting and the South Seas, society almost checkmated fate; he reverted to a deeper destiny than the world allowed him, brushed himself clear of the dust of ordinary life, and discovered a pattern underneath which he had to follow.

The field of adventure has been narrowed and the power of society has grown; this book may be a final salute. Certainly it reverberates. Bolitho's regiments of ideas march with bands and banners; if necessary he would omit the campaigns of Napoleon to tell us about his family—and not the small talk, but the profound underlying family motive, the search for immortality which created half a dozen kingdoms. From the orgiastic

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mysteries of Greece to the morality of Isadora Duncan's dancing, he discovers impulses behind actions, ideas behind facts. There is a rush, an eagerness of mental vitality in his book, and it is not an eagerness to prove a point, but to go on to the next one.

I suppose that accounts for the difficulties of the style. Here is a sentence about Philip of Macedon:

> When such a man is also good-humored, with the temperament of a mountain and the health of a rock, infectiously gay at a party, keen as a schoolboy in sport, vain with the exuberant half-seriousness of a man more pleased at heart with life than with himself, with the grin as well as the game always on his side, he more than conquers, he oppresses.

This begins brilliantly and fades before the final words where the accent should fall and Bolitho will at times write a five-line parenthesis between two half-lines of a simple declarative. It is not an affected style; it conforms properly to Bolitho's mind, which cannot isolate, but which can connect and re-create.

GILBERT SELDES

FROM SANDY HOOK TO 62°: *being some Account of the Adventures, Exploits, and Services of the old New York Pilot Boats by Charles Edward Russell* (CENTURY. $3.50)

MR. RUSSELL has assembled this chapter of American nautical history from the records of the United New York and New Jersey Sandy Hook Pilots' Association; and he has supplemented and enlivened it with contemporary newspaper records, with some of his own experiences as a journalist, and with recollections of many of the oldest pilot members of the Association. Attempting no systematic chronological history of pilotage in and about the port of New York, he nevertheless succeeds admirably in conveying the tradition and spirit of the guild of pilots from about 1812 to the close of the competitive era, at the end of the last century. He performs his task chiefly by the sound method of narrating *in extenso* the most stirring and typical episodes in the history of pilotage, and by giving detailed portraits of some arresting characters.

During this long competitive era, before the pilots collectively owned the present efficient steam craft or had begun to serve incoming vessels in a fixed rotation, they cruised far to eastward or southward in small, swift schooners, in the effort to outdistance each other to the chances on which their livelihood depended. Mr. Russell narrates one instance in which a pilot travelled fourteen-hundred miles, all told, that he might pilot an incoming steamship twenty-three. From 1838 to 1895 fifty-six pilot boats were totally lost, other than the many wrecked or sunk by collision; and nearly a hundred pilots perished at sea. It was a wasteful system, bound to pass. But while it endured it was crowded with the sternly romantic drama of man's struggle against overpowering natural forces and of determined and resourceful men's attempts to outdo one another. This drama, presented as simply as possible and left to speak for itself, is the substance of Mr. Russell's nineteen chapters. Despite some padding here and there, they make superb reading and a claim upon the excited gratitude of every reader whose pulse has ever quickened to the heroic tradition of sail.

WILSON FOLLETT

GOD HAVE MERCY ON US *by William T. Scanlon* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $2.50)

IT'S A GREAT WAR *by Mary Lee* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $3.00)

THE PRIZE of $25,000, offered by the Houghton Mifflin Company and the *American Legion Monthly* for a novel of the World War, has been divided between William T. Scanlon and Mary Lee. The justice of the division

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is apparent; for the two novels, both excellent in their kind, are so dissimilar in content that comparison is next to impossible. Each of these novels presents a highly realistic and disillusioned picture of the war, each adds something different and essential to our impressions of the vast chaos of conflict. But their points of view are poles apart. Mary Lee has drawn her material from the welter of wartime activity behind the front, from the offices, hospitals, barracks and canteens. Her characters are the nurses, clerical workers, secretaries, and entertainers who composed the great non-combatant army of modern warfare. In a staccato and rather confused style Miss Lee has managed to convey something of the gigantic bewilderment of those days in France, the seamy and sordid and disillusioning side of war, the bitterness and waste of life. She relies for her effect upon the diligent piling up of instantaneous and detached impressions. It is almost as if she had attempted a literal rendition of those vivid and disordered days. *It's a Great War* is a powerful book, but it is too amorphous to be accounted a literary masterpiece.

William T. Scanlon, on the other hand, has written a terse and orderly narrative which makes no pretense of being fiction. It is an unassuming account of his experiences in the Marine Corps, and particularly of the months he spent fighting at the front, at Verdun, at Château-Thierry and Soissons, and in the Meuse-Argonne. Mr. Scanlon's tale is at once thrilling and horrible, as any true story of the war inevitably must be, but it is neither neurotic nor insensitive. Mr. Scanlon pictures the war as it must have seemed to a thorough and efficient Sergeant of Marines—a good soldier who, without inquiring into the major causes and actions of the war, knew pretty well what was happening on his minute section of the Western front. Mr. Scanlon's is as valuable and informative a record of the World War as has yet been produced by an American participant.

MARGARET WALLACE

DIME NOVELS *by Edmund Pearson* (LITTLE, BROWN. $3.00)

WHEN a librarian turns to vice the outcome is as exciting as it is unusual. Mr. Pearson, after dallying with old murders, has turned his attention to the dime novel from its rise to the last dregs we see at the newsstands today. He insists, and proves, that the books read in the hay-loft by excited boys, and in places even more private by their sympathetic fathers, were very much maligned.

In their beginnings, the dime novels were conventional beyond words and written in excellent, though stilted, English. The heroes were brave and true and the heroines were pure and beautiful. It was the rapid competition that cheapened the standard. And even at their worst they merely equalled the "one-a-week" we buy in binding today. Literary hacks combined under pseudonyms and wrote series running into hundreds of titles. These were printed by the car-load by Beadle and his associates and read throughout the country.

Those of us to whom the Old Sleuth, Nick Carter and Deadwood Dick are mere names can understand the enthusiasm of our fathers when we read the exciting excerpts Mr. Pearson lards the book with so liberally. The books were miracles in the literature of escape and should have produced a nation of idealists. Even today, when we regard such books as quaint, we find that they have not lost their old vigor. In fact, the first dime novel, *Malaeska,* has just been re-issued.

To preserve some decorum, Mr. Pearson is very thorough. He gives the social and political background of the times in the Mark Sullivan manner and he devotes a chapter to present-day notables who read dime novels in their youth and were whipped for it. But his zest and the numerous illustrations defeat his purpose. For the book is a thriller. In fact, it might be called, in the good old manner, "The Thriller's Revenge; or, From Haymow to Exhibition Case".

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THE GOTHICK NORTH *by Sacheverell Sitwell* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $5.00)

MR. SITWELL has, as he would be the first to admit, written a fascinating and refreshing book on the Middle Ages. With his customary dread of the obvious and banal, he has ignored Notre-Dame and the other hackneyed examples and gone to strange sources for his material. From old tapestries lying forgotten in church lofts and from miniatures painted on manuscripts by unknown monks he has re-created the whole panorama of medieval life with vividness and clarity. The scene is crowded with people and color. The hunting-horns bray, the noble ladies walk in the gardens, knights fight in their unwieldy armor, peasants gather the crops; and one sees them and is with them. The miniatures are more quiet and peaceful, yet they echo all the brilliance of the tapestries.

All of this is written in prose that is almost perfect. It sings, it glides, it glows. Yet, unlike his verse, it is never marred by mannerisms nor the suggestion of a precious style. Sacheverell Sitwell here, as in his earlier book, *Southern Baroque Art,* proves himself a consummate artist who handles words with more than magic power. He has not only achieved a style but has definite things to say.

For from all this confusion of the Middle Ages, the author draws his conclusion that, like a theme, weaves itself throughout the book. The Gothick man, just out of barbarism, who acknowledged no antecedents, was a force not equalled since. All art and architecture mirrored him and the chivalry he created to justify himself. His influence was felt over all the known world. Even the Renaissance artists, who later overpowered him, were so impressed by him that his type came to be their ideal of beauty and truth. This Gothick aristocrat was tall and slim, with tapering fingers, and he had long fair hair.

It may not be altogether beside the point to observe that this is also a description of Mr. Sitwell and his sister, Edith. For the book, if it were only a brilliant mirror of the Middle Ages, would be merely the success that many other men have grasped at. But Mr. Sitwell is a personality and an individualist. His very pattern is unique. Between the sections devoted to the tapestries in the castles and the miniatures in the monasteries is a modern interlude. Its presence is justified by its use in comparing our lives and that of the Gothick Knight. But it would justify itself by its own strangeness. It is the portrait of Sacheverell Sitwell, today writing his book. There is a violent and hypersensitive dislike for the modern day that is overpowering. And there is an extraordinary fictional romance that is Gide in method and Proust in manner.

PAUL ALLEN

CYRANO: SWORDSMAN, LIBERTIN, AND MAN OF LETTERS *by Cameron Rogers* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.50)

IN *Cyrano,* Mr. Rogers has grafted the modernist's preoccupation with the psychological well-springs of action onto the biography of as picaresque and romantic a hero as ever was conceived by Dumas or Henry Fielding. Mr. Rogers deals with Cyrano as a man become the victim of his mental image of himself. His psychology is dominated by an ungainly nose; and because of his sensitiveness on this score, like that Don Quixote he despises, he is forever jousting with windmills. But for a nose, the first sword of France might have become a noted scholar and man-of-letters. The swaggering and often pathetic figure moves against a brilliantly drawn background of seventeenth-century France.

Perhaps the finest scenes of Mr. Rogers's book are those laid in the taverns. The Libertin Society, a famous literary coterie of the time, foregathered in the common tap-room. In the fold of this society the real Cyrano—not the man of violence but the man of thought—found himself at last. His efforts as

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a dramatist were noteworthy enough to inspire plagiarism from such a one as Molière. That the latter's *Les Fourberies de Scapin* is the well-known play, instead of Cyrano's *The Pedant Made Game Of,* is only another aspect of the tragedy that dogged the man his whole life through.

It is difficult to conclude without at least some slight comparison with Rostand's famous play. One can only say that between the heroes of the realist Rogers and those of the romantic Rostand, there is little in common but a nose.

FRANCES BURKE HALEY

THE TRAGIC ERA *by Claude G. Bowers* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $5.00)

THIS reportorial history of the intrigues after Lincoln has both the faults and the virtues of journalistic writing. Fortunately, the virtues predominate; they make Mr. Bowers's book an unforgettable record of an unforgivable period in American history. There are several intervals of dull and difficult reading; on the other hand, there are many stretches of excellently written passages, in which the significance of the facts presented does not obscure the quality of the author's work.

The intrigues begin while the nation is waiting for the expected word of Lincoln's death. As North and South voice their realization of the loss they have suffered, political figures in Washington move in the night to countermand the policies of the dying President through the unwilling hand of Andrew Johnson. The reader finds himself caught up in the various political cross-currents, rubbing his elbow against the shoulders of the period's leaders, who turn out to be men of mean stature and meaner motives. Names slightly stressed in the conventional history of the era are given the emphasis here which their activities at that time merit. Stevens, Sumner, Stanton and Chase, Ben Butler, Trumbull, Welles and Morton, are acidly etched by the author. Johnson, Lincoln's successor, is presented in a friendly light which his frustrated impeachment never shed in other chronicles of the Reconstruction era; Grant is pictured as a man accustomed to take orders, and, when thrust into a position of authority, lost because he attempts to give commands of his own. The General who saved the Union under the direction of more capable minds shrinks to the puny figure of a President incapable of initiating improvements, directing political forces, selecting official (and unofficial) advisors.

Mr. Bowers's documentation is novel and thorough; scarcely a page passes without its foot-notes. One wishes that he had given a little more attention to the North during the tragic era; one wishes that his research had included a more frequent reference to periodicals and newspapers of the South which might have reflected conditions north of Washington as adequately as the New York papers quoted seem to have pictured the situation in the South. Despite his slightly one-sided panorama, Mr. Bowers's work stands forth as a merciless indictment of men and affairs too long whitewashed by historians.

IRVING ASTRACHAN

THE PLAYS OF FERENC MOLNAR *With a foreword by David Belasco* (VANGUARD. $6.00)

MOLNAR can depict with equal ease and familiarity boarding-house and law court, shop and theatre, royal palace—and, for that matter, heaven and hell. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that royalty and religion, whatever else they may be, are glorified dramatic spectacles. But Molnar indulges in no glorification; he speaks always in an ordinary tone of voice and thus lends to all his work an air of intimacy and familiarity. In other respects his plays may be very diverse: sometimes they are stark realism in a narrow sense, as in parts of *Liliom* or *The Glass Slipper;* on the other hand they may

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be fairy tales, like *The White Cloud,* which might have been written by Hans Christian Andersen.

It is because of this catholicity that Molnar's plays have been produced in most of the great theatrical centers of Europe and America and that they are now collected in an edition which (as a note informs us) "is published simultaneously, in the languages of their countries, in Budapest, Berlin, Rome, London, and New York".

Molnar's popularity is due partly to sentimentality, partly to a faculty for seeing something dramatic in every situation, even the most ordinary. This ability is a source of weakness as well as of strength, for the subjects treated are sometimes so trivial as to be of no more than temporary interest. On the other hand it enables him to write such a masterpiece as *Liliom,* where the tragedy is fashioned out of seemingly impossible material: characters who have no ability to express themselves and only the most simple and ordinary things to express.

But whether trivial or significant, Molnar's plays are always good entertainment. And to the student of the drama this collected edition is of great importance. Even the ardent Molnarite will be surprised at the number of plays—and the introduction (by Mr. Louis Rittenberg) informs us that Molnar is a novelist and poet as well as a playwright.

EASTER AND OTHER PLAYS *by August Strindberg* (CAPE & SMITH. $2.50)

MR. BERNARD SHAW, who can always be relied upon to say or do something unusual, must have been hard put to it when he was awarded the Nobel prize. On such occasions even very original authors have confined themselves to accepting the honor and making the usual perfunctory address. But Mr. Shaw's resources did not fail him. He did not (as some expected him to do) decline the award —was he influenced by the fact that Alfred Nobel was, like Major Barbara's father, a manufacturer of munitions? Instead, Mr. Shaw announced that he would use the prize to endow a foundation for the translation into English of the works of Swedish authors, thus furthering at the same time the progress of literature and international understanding and amity.

It is very appropriate that the first volume in the series should be a selection of the plays of Sweden's great dramatist. Strindberg has become an international classic and has exerted a powerful influence on the theatre in all western countries. He is, in many ways, the antithesis of Mr. Shaw: his plays are grim and humorless and devastating in their disillusion. But he was, like Mr. Shaw, a relentless antagonist of fraud and sham in all their forms; and he was extraordinarily keen in his analysis and depiction of character.

The volume contains four plays: *Easter, The Dance of Death, The Ghost Sonata,* and *A Dream Play.* The translations, one of which is by the Swedish Ambassador to London, are well executed and there is an introduction by Professor J. G. Robertson of the University of London. The reader cannot help wishing that Professor Robertson had written at greater length, for Strindberg was one of the most interesting of all authors—versatile and original beyond the point of eccentricity.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE, LIFE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, IN COÖPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF AMERICA

Not only are more people reading books than ever before in the history of the United States, but the consumption of books per capita of readers seems definitely to be on the increase, if comments of various librarians are based upon accurate observation. This is especially true in the circulation departments, where the average turnover in the larger libraries, at any rate, as indicated by the frequency with which new cards have to be made out, is greater than ever.

The Monthly Score completes its eleventh year with this issue. It is interesting to recall the terrific slump in war books which began shortly after the Armistice and to note with some degree of self-satisfaction your reporter's prediction that in another ten years those who were children then would be reading war books with the same avidity that we who began our reading habits ten or twelve years after the Civil War fed on stories of that great conflict. The Great War will furnish the background for a high percentage of all fiction written in English, French or German for many years to come.

—F. P. S.

NOVELS

1. ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT	*Erich Maria Remarque*	LITTLE, BROWN
2. ROPER'S ROW	*Warwick Deeping*	KNOPF
3. THEY STOOPED TO FOLLY	*Ellen Glasgow*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
4. THE GALAXY	*Susan Ertz*	APPLETON
5. SCARLET SISTER MARY	*Julia Peterkin*	BOBBS-MERRILL
6. WHITEOAKS OF JALNA *	*Mazo de la Roche*	LITTLE, BROWN
7. DODSWORTH	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT, BRACE
8. THE DARK JOURNEY *	*Julian Green*	HARPERS
9. BLAIR'S ATTIC	*Joseph C. Lincoln and Freeman Lincoln*	COWARD-MCCANN
10. RED SILENCE *	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
11. A LANTERN IN HER HAND	*Bess Streeter Aldrich*	APPLETON
12. DARK HESTER	*Anne Douglas Sedgwick*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

GENERAL

1. HENRY THE EIGHTH	*Francis Hackett*	LIVERIGHT
2. THE ART OF THINKING	*Ernest Dimnet*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
3. A PREFACE TO MORALS	*Walter Lippmann*	MACMILLAN
4. THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP	*Joan Lowell*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
5. ELIZABETH AND ESSEX	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT, BRACE
6. THE MANSIONS OF PHILOSOPHY	*Will Durant*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
7. STRANGE INTERLUDE	*Eugene O'Neill*	LIVERIGHT
8. SALT WATER TAFFY	*Corey Ford*	PUTNAM
9. JOHN BROWN'S BODY	*Stephen Vincent Benét*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
10. MID-CHANNEL	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	HARPERS
11. THE TRAGIC ERA *	*Claude G. Bowers*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
12. LION	*Martin Johnson*	PUTNAM

* *This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.*

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Voortrekkers of Yesterday and Today

BY ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE

He shall desire loneliness and his desire
shall bring,
Hard on his heels, a thousand wheels, a
People and a King.
He shall come back on his own track, and
by his scarce-cooled camp
There shall he meet the roaring street, the
derrick and the stamp:
There he shall blaze a nation's ways with
hatchet and with brand,
Till on his last-won wilderness an Empire's
outposts stand.

THERE are the last six lines, all that for a time were believed to be in existence, of the "lost" Kipling poem. It was originally written with the title "The Foreloper". When it was written even Mr. Kipling does not know. In the spring of 1908 the six lines were sent to Mr. Kipling, who, through his secretary, acknowledged their authorship, but said that he could not remember when or where they were published, or what the rest of the poem was. Eventually the entire poem was found, for it appears in the Inclusive Edition of Kipling's verse with a few minor changes and the new title of "The Voortrekker".

Here, on the travel shelf of the hour, are tales of the voortrekkers of yesterday and today. Like the hero of the Kipling poem they have desired loneliness, and in seeking it have heard the whistle of the gull and seen the blind wave break in fire; and all too soon have had their eyes vexed by neighbors' smoke and their rest broken by the clamorous voices of those who have followed in their wake. For in our swiftly-moving modern world the uncharted seas of one decade are the congested lanes of the next.

South America has taken the place of Africa as the dark continent. Forty years ago when Rider Haggard wanted a plausible background for the astonishing adventures of *She* and *King Solomon's Mines*, he turned to Africa; twenty years ago Conan Doyle for the setting of *The Lost World* went to South America. Motor-car roads wind through the African game fields of yesterday. South America is the great division of the world, outside the polar regions, with large districts unknown to white men. The conventional traveller sees beautiful and modern cities like Rio, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo. Back of these cities there is an interior with hundreds of thousands of natives upon whom civilization has made no impression.

As late as 1928, Dr. Herbert Spencer Dickey, who, in collaboration with Hawthorne Daniel, writes *Misadventures of a Tropical Medico* (Dodd, Mead. $3.50), discovered a tribe in Venezuela that, so far as he has been able to learn, had never before been reported by white men. Dr. Dickey's experiences cover a period of thirty years, a thirty years of extraordinary progress. When, a mere boy who had just come into possession of his medical degree, he journeyed to Colombia, he found that republic in the throes of a revolution that might have been staged by Richard Harding Davis or O. Henry. That does not mean that it was a comic-opera revolution. It raged for four years and took a toll of two-hundred-and-fifty thousand lives, for the peons of the contending armies, though bad shots, were murderously accomplished in the use of the machete.

There is still romantic adventure, perhaps not quite as rose-colored as Mr. Frederick O'Brien pictured it, to be found in the South

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Seas. Journey vicariously with Robert Dean Frisbie in his *The Book of Puka-Puka* (Century. $3.50), to Puka-Puka or Danger Island, where the author went nine years ago for what he believed to be the last six months of a tubercular-afflicted existence, and where he lived for four years as a trader and a lotus-eater. Last spring in the full vigor of health he visited the United States, but after a brief stay he sailed back to the South Seas, vowing never to leave them again.

But before finding Puka-Puka and romance Mr. Frisbie had wandered for years. Nearly everywhere else civilization had penetrated, destroying the charm. Tahiti, the most romantically beautiful of all the islands, had become a tourist resort. Then one day he found Puka-Puka, which lies in a triangle with the Hawaiian, the Marquesas, and the Samoan Islands as the apexes. There, in a spirit akin to that of Paul Gauguin renouncing the world and unshackled by puritanical conventions, he settled down to the companionship of Sea Foam, and Old William, and Benny, and Bones.

In world dimensions, geographically it is a mere step from the Puka-Puka of Mr. Frisbie's narrative to that part of the Philippine Archipelago described by Mabel Cook Cole in *Savage Gentlemen* (Van Nostrand. $3.50). Ethnologically it is no more. Mrs. Cole's Tinguians are cousins to the Puka-Pukans, sharing many of their characteristics and customs.

Savage Gentlemen is a record of courage and high achievement. As George A. Dorsey in his Introduction sums it up, "The Coles, in three-and-a-half years got further into the heart of some of the wildest of the Philippine tribes than the Spaniards got in three-and-a-half centuries".

Not exactly voortrekkers themselves, but "hard on the heels" of the voortrekkers are Albert Londres in *A Very Naked People* (Liveright. $3.00), and Grace Flandrau in *Then I Saw the Congo* (Harcourt, Brace. $3.50). Both books are conducive to a certain contentment of mind, to a resignation to vicarious travel. Entertaining and stimulating reading by the fireside at home, they convey powerfully a sense of the physical suffering incidental to a penetration of equatorial Africa. Ole Devil Sea is no more to be feared than Ole Devil Sun.

Nimble, audacious, ironic, Londres's book has been something of a sensation in France, arousing in certain circles of colonial administration an antagonism similar to that provoked half a century ago by Alphonse Daudet's *Tartarin de Tarascon*. Yet beneath the mocking tone there is tribute to the splendid achievement and courage of the real voortrekkers. In Africa as in Asia and in the Pacific Islands the East is not to be hustled and is hard to change. Often the direct road is the adroit indirect road. The mosque at Timbuctoo was falling to pieces. The French Commandant sent for the Cadi. "Listen," he said, "I am not a Moslem, and I've nothing to do with your affairs, but your mosque is falling down. Mahommed won't know what to tell Allah. Don't you think it ought to be shored up?" All Timbuctoo responded to the indirect suggestion.

A Very Naked People begins at Dakar; so does *Then I Saw the Congo*. From there M. Londres travelled through the French Soudan, the High Volta, the Ivory Coast, Togoland, Dahomey, and the Congo; from there Grace Flandrau crossed Africa through the Belgian Congo and Tanganyika to the Indian Ocean. The two narratives, poles apart in the telling, lead to the same general conclusions. For example, both writers are positive in the assertion that the slave trade, except in name, still exists. Yet neither writes angrily. Of the natives of today Mrs. Flandrau suggests: "Whereas, had their great-great-great grandparents been battened into the mortal hold of a slaver, these same gentlemen might now be making up lower berths, playing the saxophone in night clubs, or furnishing models to the black-faced comedians. So possibly it's all for the best".

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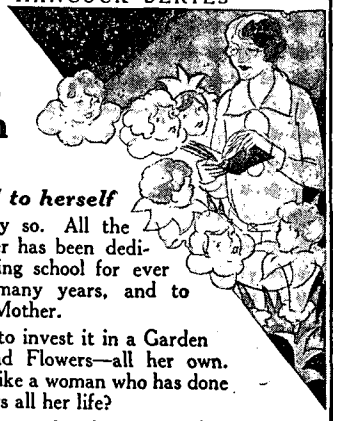

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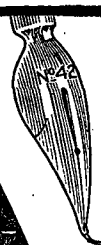

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THE PRINTED WORD

by Wilson Follett

THE BETTER SORT

THIS department had occasion of late to mention the effect on modern English prose of the device professionally known as "suspension points"—three evenly spaced full stops (. . .) used to signify elision, or four such stops wherever the elision coincides with the end of a sentence. The traditional use of this mark of punctuation in Anglo-American printing is to denote omissions from a passage otherwise quoted *verbatim*—the same purpose for which an elder custom used asterisks, as the New York *Times* and some other newspapers still do. In modern French prose, suspension points have long been used, not to indicate the omission of actual words from something quoted, but to suggest the occurrence in someone's mind of words or thoughts or half-thoughts beyond what the author chooses to report. About 1900, when Continental influences began to be visibly important in British and American fiction, this Gallic habit was assimilated. It flourished uncontrollably and ridiculously in the decade 1905-15; and in some of the novels published about 1912-14 there are whole printed pages which strike the casual eye as being made up chiefly of black dots. After that the habit began slowly to wane. Probably it undermined itself by the preposterousness of its excesses. It had, of course, no conceivable importance in itself, but it did exert an appreciable influence on style, especially the style of novelists, who used it chiefly to lighten their labors by substituting a gasping sort of incoherence for actual definition of what they wanted to convey. It is salutary for prose that most of the English-speaking world has decided at last to use other and more workmanlike methods of hinting unuttered things, and begun to regard suspension points as a pretty sad use of printer's ink, as well as of the costly time of linotype operators. Words are, after all, the tools of a writer's trade; and the suspension points which broke out like prickly heat all over a decade of fiction served the writer chiefly as an inane pretext for not more than half doing his job.

Anyone who has forgotten how the abuse of this trick made novelists' sentences gasp and stutter fifteen years ago can refresh his memory by a look at the work of the smartest advertising agencies of this very season, in any magazine carrying much national advertising. There is room for a very amusing historical paper on the way American advertising picks up at third hand, a decade or more after the fact, all the pretty outgrown tricks of the writers who imitate the imitators of literary fashions. It is a topic to which I shall have to recur briefly. At the moment I wish only to mention two present abodes of this mannerism which, so far as the consensus of American typography is concerned, is going out. Advertising, then, is one of the two. The other is the *Atlantic Monthly*.

In one part of a continued story of 1919-20 which I contributed to the *Atlantic*—a passage which aspired to communicate the sensations of a drowning boy—I tried to hint the inconsecutiveness of the poor fellow's thoughts by a liberal sprinkling of suspension

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points, increasing their frequency as he neared the end of consciousness. When I got my proofs I perceived that for each set of my exuberant young dots the printer had substituted the neat one-em dash of the orthodox textbooks; and with dashes the instalment was printed. It was evident to me that if up to that time the *Atlantic* had ever in its long life printed suspension points in their characteristic modern use, it must have been at the insistence of some author so redoubtable that no editor on earth could gainsay him—Mr. Wells, say, or Mr. Shaw.

I am bringing the point up now for the following reason: In 1929, ten whole years after the tide of this fashion had begun to ebb, Miss Mazo de la Roche contributes to the *Atlantic* a continued story one passage of which aspires to communicate the sensations of a drowning boy; and she tries to hint the inconsecutiveness of the poor fellow's thoughts by a liberal sprinkling of suspension points, increasing their frequency as he nears the end of consciousness. And in the August issue (CXLIV, 2, 270) the reader who looks will find each set of her exuberant dots in cold type, presumably just as she wrote them. He will also find other sets pretty freely scattered through the instalment, besides a few elsewhere in the magazine. In short, after many years of determined resistance to the modern fashion, this purist among magazines has succumbed to it just at the point of its having rather thoroughly ceased to be a fashion. The *Atlantic* has not only been the last to lay the old aside: it has done its discarding well after the disappearance of any ostensible need to do it at all. It had only to persist in its own established convention to renew its name for seeing beyond mere fads. Adopting the fad of an earlier decade, it lays itself under suspicion of having merely jumped from useless obstinacy to useless complaisance.

What has actually occurred, I can but think, is a definite break in the *Atlantic's* rather puristical tradition, a little different in its immediate cause from the surrender of standards which is simultaneously going on almost everywhere else, but nevertheless a product of the same general listlessness about codes of usage. Mr. George B. Ives, author of the manual *Atlantic Usage,* was for years the custodian of the *Atlantic's* honor so far as its "house usage" was concerned. ("House usage" is that function of a publishing office which makes consistent application of its preferences in spelling, punctuation, diction, and such rhetorical alternatives as can be reduced to exact rule. Obviously there must be someone to make sure that if a magazine spells "labor" as "labour", it shall also spell "center" as "centre", and always alike; for the manuscripts of even the most literate authors show wide variation in a thousand particulars about which an editor ought to keep his magazine consistent with itself.) Mr. Ives, a martinet and a purist with all-seeing eye and merciless blue-pencil, may sometimes have struck *Atlantic* authors as a little austere in his application of austere rules. But the fact remains that he taught authors more about precision and care than most universities could have done, and for a long stretch of years he kept the magazine unique on this continent in the matter of rhetorical cleanness. The evident change that has come to pass represents, I surmise, simply this one man's retirement from active duty. Mr. Ives must have been about the last man in America—the last, that is, in a position to make himself felt—who did his work in the light of an uncompromising conviction that scholarly exactitude in print is worth while in an age of unkemptness widely tolerated, not to say advocated.

I begin with the *Atlantic Monthly,* then, precisely because it held out so long that its capitulation, coming of a sudden, disconcerts one more than any gradual spread of defeatism among its contemporaries. To mention *all* of the symptoms that would once have fallen under Mr. Ives's blue-pencil would make a long register, impossible here. But let

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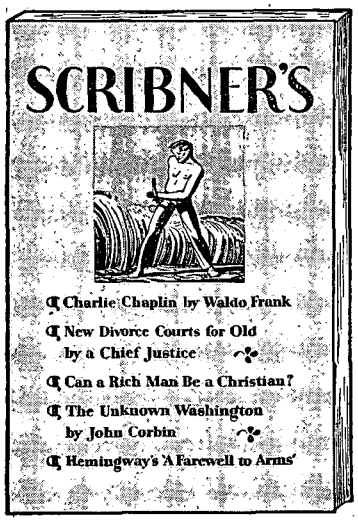

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us have a handful of the illustrations provided by one issue, the same already cited:

The possessive case used of inanimate and unpersonified things; as, "the night's remainder" (p. 181), "the low bed's head" (p. 182), "the weather's magic" (p. 256).

"While" used, not only as an adversative, but as an adversative contradicting its undoubted temporal meaning: "On this dreamy island most of the work is done at night, while the day is reserved for sleep" (p. 186).

"At about", as "At about ten o'clock" (p. 188) —"about" in this construction being itself a preposition holding the sense of both words.

"As though" for "as if" (pp. 191, 195, 271, and elsewhere). For a good stiff dissertation on this subject, consult the "Lexicographer" of *The Literary Digest.*

Logically equal ideas in unlike and clashing constructions; e.g., ". . . to think *how far* I had drifted from my old life and *of* the many years that had passed . . ." (p. 193). [Italics, here and below, are mine.]

Illogical antecedent, referring to a meaning buried in an adjective: "It was not open to me . . . to grasp the wholly intangible character of the enemy. *That conviction* [i.e., the conviction that the enemy was intangible] had to build itself up . . ." (p. 204).

Slovenly rhythm caused by sing-songing adverb-endings: "He talked animated*ly* to his partner, who listened attentive*ly*, from time to time grave*ly* nodding his head" (p. 227).

"Posted" in the meaning of "informed" (p. 252).

Comparison of the absolute word "appreciate": "appreciates fully as much as" (p. 252).

Negative so misplaced as to render the whole sentence grotesque: "Mohammedan countries cannot blame Islam for their decadence, but rather the fact that they have twisted and ignored the pure teachings of Islam without supplanting them with anything better" (p. 252). Note also the ugly "without . . . with".

On the other hand, I fear that Mr. Ives would give his cordial sanction to the gentlemen who use apologetic quotation marks for "champion of the world" and "knocked out" (p. 220) and for the dialectal phrases in "compel 'ole marster' to sell this faithful slave 'down ribber'" (p. 268). It is comforting to know that he would have blessed the "me" in the sentence "But none but me turns out to walk there", however little he may have liked the two "but's". What he would have done with the business-office English of "He begged to place", on encountering it in a sonnet otherwise adroit (p. 196), I confess I don't know. I like to think he would pounce on the lubberly expression "six knots an hour" (p. 224): a knot is essentially a unit of speed per hour, and to say "six knots an hour" is like saying "daily wage per day". A vessel simply makes so many knots—i.e., nautical miles per hour.

Mr. Ives would have had an extraordinarily delicate problem on his hands in the interesting article "Grendel Walks Again", by Mary Lee Davis (p. 173 *et seq.*), for two-thirds of it is written in the iambic measure of the most irreproachable blank verse masquerading as prose, thus:

"Almost, but never quite, I saw it face to face; but slantingly I saw it always; and all the long night long I knew it to be surely there. Ever on padded foot it stalked in grim and shadowed silence . . ." (p. 183).

I append very brief parallel exhibits from a handful of the *Atlantic's* most respectable contemporaries, basing each cluster on one issue only, that of August, 1929. First, consider *Harpers Magazine* (spelled, one should notice, with the apostrophe on shelf-back and Contents page, and without it on the cover and elsewhere). The number opens with an article in which Count Keyserling, from the immense altitude of his ethereal plane, condescends to explain a largely imaginary America to itself. His explanation (written, we are told, directly in English) consists very

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largely of what Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, in his famous Cambridge lecture, labelled "Jargon"; and not only of Jargon, but in large measure of a single formula of Jargon, the most pestilent of all its formulas—the one based on the maltreated word "line": "Along the lines of his animal life", "development on the lines of a tradition", "on the line of the new adjustment", "on the lines of material and technical development", "scientific and artistic lines", "the right standard on all planes and lines", "on the lines of spiritual blindness", "on the line of standardization", "on its present lines", "accustomed lines of action"; yea, even "all sorts of lines"—thus Count Keyserling in one twelve-page article which also refers to the "most dangerous" of two ideas. One can translate Count Keyserling writing in German, if one sees any object in doing it; but who shall translate his English?

To continue, I note hastily:

Statement collapsed by misplaced negative: "The most interesting part of a theory is hardly ever to be found in its intrinsic truth . . . but in its psychological significance" (p. 268); "All foods are not valuable to us in proportion to their appeal to our appetites" (p. 362)—that is, *Not* all foods *are,* etc.

Double comparison with half of it left dangling: "earning as much or more than ever they did" (p. 246), "as well, or better, than the younger man" (p. 347). Note also (p. 249) a similar outcome of telescoping two idioms: "He often insists—and at times succeeds—in being master in his own house".

Abuse of "have" when its subject is not the agent: "He wanted to hum things that were on the radio and have someone suddenly turn it off and his voice go on alone" (p. 354). (Cf. "He had his wife run away on him".)

"Apparent" for "evident" (p. 365).

Clumsy implication of a form of the verb not present: "I marvel indeed that Ethel's child and I managed to do as well as we *have*" (p. 364); "Adults can worry a great deal less over these things than many of them *have* in recent years" (p. 367).

"At about eleven months" (p. 366).

Erroneous sequence of tenses: "If instruction could be started when children *were* young enough . . ." (p. 367); "I lived to learn that savages swallow*ed* meat in hunks" (p. 368, note).

Shocking mispunctuation of independent clauses: "Clothes do not matter, in fact, the less there are of them the less they matter" (p. 383).

Singular verb with dual subject: ". . . Mr. Owen Young, whose tireless patience and dexterity is felt to have contributed . . ." (p. 389).

And in "Among the New Books", front advertising section, I notice our old friend the one-of-those-who-is construction: "*Pope or Mussolini* by John Hearly is one of those timely books which *keeps* step with events"; also the odd sentence, "We pass it on to our readers with *the request that* if anyone recognizes these lines we shall be pleased and grateful for any information given to us". Any one of us can and often does write such hurried locutions. The point is that it takes a number of persons fumbling as one to get them printed and published.

In *Scribner's Magazine* Professor Phelps earns real gratitude—more than he is likely to get in this generation—by his neat exposure of the apologists for that darling of the New Grammar, "It is me". He says: "If it is right to say 'it is me' then it is right to say 'it was me', and if it is right to say 'it was me', then it is right to say 'it was me who wrote this' ". At which one remarks in classic words: "Stick a pin there, Brother Horace!" After such a piece of valiant horse sense it is the more distressing to observe how Professor Phelps's proofreader has let him down in this sentence: "There *is* an urbanity, a literary flavor, a charm . . . that *illuminate* every page" (p. 127). And someone may be perturbed by: "It is hard to say in which of two respects they most greatly

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912

Of THE BOOKMAN, published monthly at Camden, New Jersey, for October 1, 1929

State of New York } ss.
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Before me, a notary public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Seward Collins, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the president of the Bookman Publishing Company, Incorporated, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, Seward Collins, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City;

Editor, Seward Collins, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City;

Managing Editor, L. A. Flynn, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City;

Business Manager, F. A. Skelton, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

2. That the owner is: The Bookman Publishing Company, Incorporated, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City; Seward Collins, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) SEWARD COLLINS,
Publisher.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of September, 1929. WILLIAM A. GERSBACH.

Notary Public.

[SEAL]

(My commission expires March 30, 1930.)

afflict the intelligent reader—boredom or filth?" which I should fail to read as a question, even aside from the "most".

From later articles of the same issue:

"It would seem from every angle that the latter *was* the proper qualification for major emphasis" (p. 148).

" 'Mothering' may not be instinctive to woman but the fact remains that *they* do it . . . much more successfully than does man" (p. 149).

"The average standard of each act was high" (p. 166). If "each act" can have an "average standard", then a foundation can doubtless be beside a building instead of under it—"a more fundamental reason behind it", I read on page 167.

"It seemed to stare at him *like* the writing on the wall at Belshazzar" (p. 186).

The most extraordinary aberration in the issue is this: Half of the vocatives in Mr. Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* are printed with no commas (e.g., "'Do you want a drink Bartolomeo?'") and the other half with commas (e.g., "'Rock her back and forth, Barto'"); with the result that when you read "'Wake up Piani!'" you haven't a notion whether Piani is being told to wake up or someone else told to wake him up. There may be in this confusion some subtle modernistic touch of art, but it wears the look of simple slovenliness.

The August *Century* has "most unique" (p. 412), "less" for "fewer" (p. 406), the misplaced negative ("I would not be understood as meaning that . . . but that . . ." (p. 417), "recreation" for "re-creation" (pp. 419, 420), "at about" (p. 439), "that" used as an adverb ("that much", p. 447), "adopted" for "adoptive" (p. 465 *et seq.*), "near-by" and "nearby" on consecutive pages (474, 475; "a nearby grade school", by the way, is about the same kind of English as "a close-to neighbor"), "a gipsy sort of *a* way" (p. 490), "as though" (p. 490), and so on. The proofreader misses "stiffled" for "stifled" (p. 492), "need" for

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"meed" (p. 392), and others. And the whole magazine is sprinkled with commas that obey a rule seventy-five years dead, as in "Consequently young people who contemplate marriage, will first be forced to discover . . ." (p. 387).

But more sins than these—and they are committed—are covered by a fine touch on page 403, "moonshiner or other" (instead of the expected, and slovenly, "otherwise"; cf. in *Harpers Magazine* the monthly department "Personal and Otherwise").

The August *North American Review* duplicates most of the foregoing curiosities, and adds on its own account a reason-is-because formula (p. 184), "inferred" for "implied" (p. 245), "continually" for "continuously" (p. 255), and two very queer fish indeed:

"For that outing she prepared for days beforehand, and talked of for days afterward" (p. 200).

"To anyone who has not seen Turkish life under the old conditions this story may seem incredible, and also that it should be possible to shut away the whole woman population" (p. 201).

Like the *Century,* the *Review* covers itself with glory by one touch of nicety so unexpected that it gives a pleasant little shock: "come thus far" (p. 232), where the inner ear ruined by much popular journalism expects "come *this* far."

Does someone feel himself prompted from within to remark that distaste for such trifling errata as those listed above shows a pettifogging and illiberal mind, a disposition to compress our nobly vital and evolving speech in a cast-iron mold of silly conventions?

If so, he may be right—in a world where a fine workman is known by the abuse of his tools, command of music is demonstrated by embracing the privilege of singing off pitch, and freedom to go where one likes is proved by stumbling on every obstacle in the way.

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WITH the opening of another book auction season in New York and the recent consolidation of the two leading auction houses in the United States into one great concern with the unwieldy name of "American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, Inc.", collectors and dealers face many new conditions. For months there have been dire predictions by the pessimistic that this "monopoly" of book auctioneering would be an injury to the seller and the buyer. The opening sales have indicated that all such fears were unfounded, and that there has been established a confidence which will make for success of the enterprise in the future. The new house will be generally known as "Anderson's" and perpetuate the memory of John Anderson, Jr., who entered the auction field in New York in 1900, and under whose able management the clearing house of literary properties in America reached a remarkable point of efficiency.

The early sales in the new house this season, with one exception, have been unimportant, but the prices paid for rare books have shown that the old collectors are still active and a large number of new collectors are buying. In the first sale there was little of outstanding importance, but it was significant that the prices for first editions of such American authors as Hawthorne, Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Mark Twain and Riley showed a general increase, while among the foreign authors there was a keen demand for the works of such authors as Barrie, Conrad, Kipling, George Moore and George Bernard Shaw. Only a few years ago the writings of these authors could be picked up in first editions for a mere song, while today they all bring good money and values are largely dependent upon

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the condition of copies, the supply of fine copies apparently having suffered a sudden diminution. The only exceptional sale so far has been that of the library of John Camp Williams, which consisted largely of English books with illustrations from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century. The late Beverly Chew was the recognized authority on books of this class, and Mr. Williams was a good second, but he never could be prevailed upon to put his knowledge of his books (of which he was a profound student) into print.

One feature of the catalogues issued by the new consolidated auction house which cannot be viewed by collectors with favor is the increasing tendency to "lump" lots of books, not always of a related character. This works against the buyer who is unable to attend the auction sales and who is after low-priced books. In one of the Anderson catalogues one lot is described as "Miscellaneous", and comprises such strange bedfellows as *Sketches and Incidents of the Siege of Lucknow,* (Mecham) London, 1857; *The Diary of a Citizen of Paris During the Terror* (Bire) London, 1896; *Two Note Books of Thomas Carlyle,* The Grolier Club, 1898, one of 387 copies; *Famous Families of New York,* (Hamm) New York, 1902; "and others. Together 14 vols., folio, 8vo, and 12mo, various bindings, v. p., v. d." To send a bid on such a lot would imply in the collector not only a catholicity of taste, but a speculative trustfulness in buying the "others" not named. But with the high costs of cataloguing, printing and distribution, it is impossible to catalogue each item separately when the price would not more than pay for the cataloguing.

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first important London sale of the present season at Sotheby's. From November 11th to 14th there was a miscellaneous sale at these rooms at which a remarkable collection of early manuscripts from a celebrated medieval library, where they were written and illustrated between the ninth and twelfth centuries. Some good illuminated manuscripts of later periods were sold at high prices. Interest was greater, however, in the extraordinary collection of manuscripts of modern authors. Among these was an autograph manuscript of *The Haunch of Venison,* four and one-half pages, in the hand of Oliver Goldsmith, together with autograph journals of Sir Joshua Reynolds, a letter of Dr. Johnson, and similar items sold by order of the descendants of Sir Joshua's sister, Mary Palmer. There was also the autograph manuscript of Charles Dickens's *The Schoolboy's Story,* ten pages, a Christmas story for 1853, presented to his friend Dean Bagot of County Down, from whom the present owner acquired it by descent. From the estate of Lieutenant-Colonel John Murray were portions of *The Culloden Papers* by Scott; Malthus's *Principles of Political Economy;* Irving's *Christopher Columbus* and Crabbe's *Tales of the Hall.*

The London sale contained an interesting letter from George Washington in which he says that he does not favor sending Jack Curtis to William and Mary College, owing to the inattention of the masters and the number of holidays. The most important historical manuscripts and documents which have appeared in years, however, are in America, the property of Dr. Rosenbach, who got them from an old New England family. These letters and documents tell the story of the foundation and early history of the American Navy.

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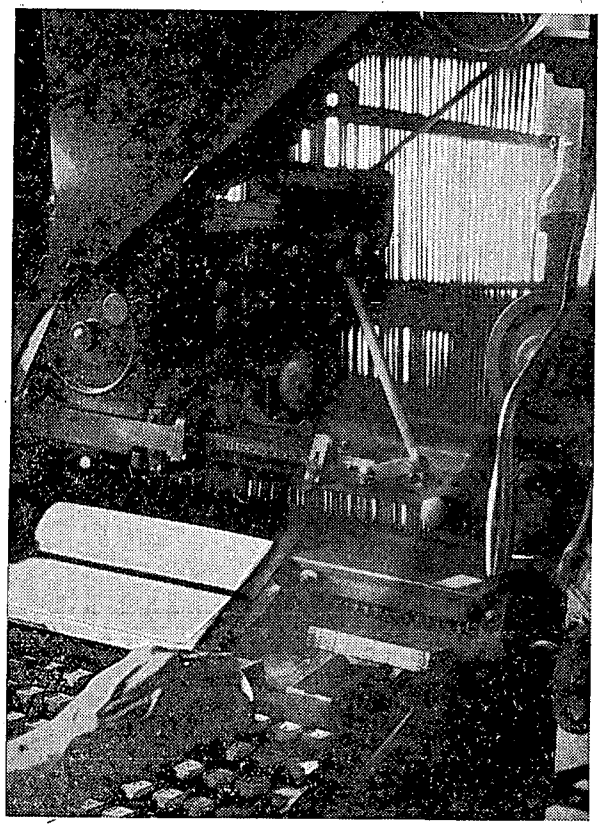

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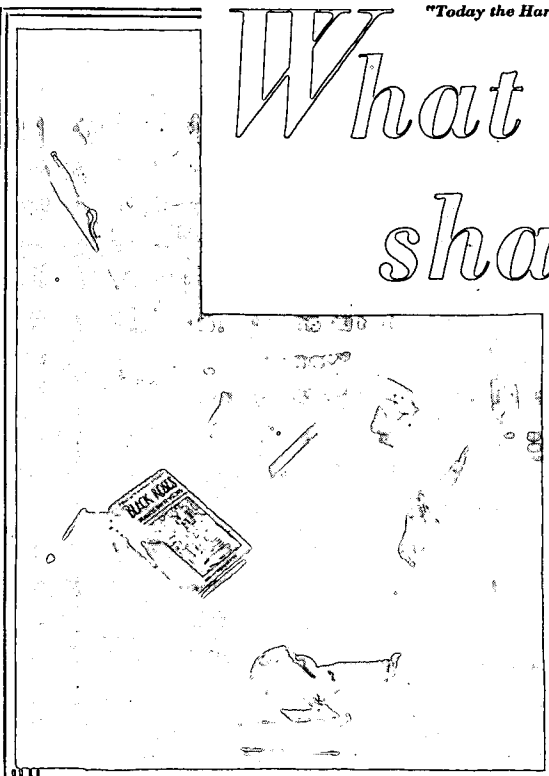

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